

# Dragons, Trappers, Masters

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Category: How to Train Your Dragon  
Genre: Adventure, Fantasy  
Language: English  
Characters: Cloudjumper, Drago Bludfist, Eret, Valka  
Status: In-Progress  
Published: 2014-08-07 18:07:27  
Updated: 2015-10-03 16:35:18  
Packaged: 2016-04-26 20:26:24  
Rating: T  
Chapters: 37  
Words: 41,155  
Publisher: www.fanfiction.net  
Summary: A dragon. A trapper. A master. These are their stories.  
(Next chapter posted!)

## 1. Prologue: Murdered

**\*\*Dragons, Trappers, Masters - Prologue\*\***

>'Today...we're going to be stealing a dragon egg, lads.'  
<br>My men gasped.

>'But, Horvutah, you'll get yourself killed!' my second-in-command protested.  
<br>I drew my sword and walked closer to him.

>'If you're questioning my orders, then your questioning Drago's orders. Believe me, I don't want to do this anymore than you, lad. But I- we have to. And if we don't, it won't be just me who dies- all of us will. He'll see to that. Or, rather, his dragons will.'  
<br>I turned my back to my men, and took a deep breath, to calm myself. My hand was sweating as I held my sword. I put it back in my belt.

>When I had calmed down, I turned to my men.  
<br>'Get the darts. I'll go ahead, and drive the mother out. When I give the signal, SHOOT!'

>'Yes, sir.'  
<p>

\* \* \*

><p>As I walked to the den, I was shaking. Drago was crazy- he was sending me into a deathtrap. Maybe that was his plan. Perhaps he was jealous of me, because I was better at trapping than he was- or I had a way with them.  
<br>No. I had to stop thinking about that. I only had to focus on one thing.

>When I had got close enough to the den, I raised my sword, and yelled, worthy of one of Drago's.  
<br>Almost immediately, I saw a draconic head poke out of the cave. The dragon snarled viciously.

><em>Are you trying to take my hatchling, human<em>?

>I said nothing, and continued to stand there.  
<br>The dragon had had

enough.

>With a huge roar, the beast charged at me. I stayed there, putting my hand out to it. It stopped just short of my hand, staring at it intently.<br>I raised my other hand slowly, so that the dragon wouldn't spook out.

>I prepared to drop it, so the men knew it was the signal.<br>I did.

>The dragon went crazy, roaring, and trying to shake the darts out of its scales.<br>But it couldn't.

>Its eyes started to close, and it laid down onto the forest floor.<br>'Sir, I think the coast is clear.' my second-in-command told me. Just to make sure, he poked it with a nearby stick. It groaned slightly; it was still conscious.

>He waited a bit more, and did it again. The dragon was silent.<br>The men started to move towards the beast.

>'Stay back, just in case...' I warned.<br>Careful not to disturb the dragon, I walked quietly back to the den, walked inside, and took the egg.

>'Looks like I'm not the one meeting a horrible fate at the hands- or rather, <em>hand</em>, of Drago today.' I whispered menacingly to the egg. I could have sworn I heard it whimper. It attempted to escape, bashing at the eggshell with its beak- which confirmed it to be a Stormcutter.

>'Can't wait to get out, can you? I'm guessing you can't wait to meet him. Well, if you want my advice, stay in that egg for as long as possible. Because, believe me, you <em>really</em> don't want to meet my boss.'

>I stuffed the egg into the pocket of my furs, and ran out of the cave.<br>This was a huge mistake, for two reasons.

>One: I'd been taught in the first days of becoming a dragon trapper, to <em>never</em>, <em>ever</em>, make <em>any</em> sudden moves, especially not running, when in a dragon's presence, whether it's conscious or not. The reason for this? Dragons' ears are very sensitive, and they can still pick up even the slightest of sounds, even in sleep. So someone walking, or running towards them, sounds like a Bewilderbeast roar to them. And, by 'taught', I mean, being forced into approaching "asleep" dragons by Drago, and getting bites, and cuts, and gods knows what else from them, because he hadn't told me that they could hear me. His excuse for this was, "learning on the job". I still have the scars.

>Two: Stealing their egg is another thing that can override dragons' unconsciousness. They sort of have a sixth sense for knowing when their egg is being stolen.<br>So, naturally, the mother Stormcutter's eyes snapped open, her anger overriding the darts' efforts to make them close again.

Knowing I did not have much time left alive, I took the Stormcutter egg out of my pocket, and threw it to my second in command.

'Take that egg, and guard it with your life. If you don't, Drago will ensure that you won't have one.'

'Yes, sir. But what about you?!'

>'You won't be seeing me again. Now, RUN! Go back to the ship! And that's an order!'  
<br>'No, sir! We're not leaving you! Are we?!'

>Some of the others looked uncertain.<br>'I'm proud of you, lad. Showing such loyalty to me...But Drago won't be happy- and that's an understatement- if all of you are killed, when there's only need for just me to die.'

>'Sir, the others may want to go, like the cowards they are, but I'm staying right here with you!'  
>'NO! GO! Only the gods can save me now...'  
>'Well, sir, if that's an order-'  
>'-then who am I to disobey you?'  
>'Goodbye, sir.'  
>'Goodbye, lad. You be a good leader to the others, now, do you hear me?'  
>'Yes.'  
>'And don't kill the mother Stormcutter for this. She was just protecting her egg...right?' I asked the Stormcutter, who was walking towards me with terrifying slowness. She knew that I was trapped now. She was taking her time, enjoying my terror.  
>Finally, my second-in-command took one last look at me, and left.  
>'Don't look behind you.' I called to him.  
>I was answered by muffled sobbing.  
>'So, who's going to make the first move, Stormcutter?'  
>I drew my sword, and, as fast as a Night Fury, I stabbed her, enough to kill her slowly. She growled, and walked faster.  
>Claws ripped into my neck. Although I had stabbed her in a fatal spot, she would die slowly. But I would die first.  
>I managed to stumble downwards onto the grass, as I was too weak to stand up.  
>She was nearly upon me now. I closed my eyes, waiting for the blast of fire that would end my pain.  
>Suddenly, I heard the familiar sound of cruel metal jaws closing onto a scaly leg.  
>I didn't need to open my eyes; I knew instinctively what had happened.  
>The Stormcutter shrieked in surprise, pain, and fury, and fell to the ground.  
>\_Good lad\_. I thought.  
>Then the darkness took me.

\* \* \*

><p>The Second-in-Command's POV  
>'Keep running! Don't look back!' I said, more to myself than the others.  
>Although my thoughts told me not to, I couldn't resist. I turned around, and saw a terrible sight.  
>Horvutah's body, his dragonskin cape (a sign of his authority) nearby, the red of the blood splattered onto it making the Monstrous Nightmare's scarlet scales stand out more than ever.  
>A noise made me turn around.  
>An animalistic growl, one of disapproval.  
>Drago grabbed me by the collar.  
>'\_Explain\_' he hissed.  
>'Erm, well, you see, sir...' I stammered, choking slightly.  
>'...I'm afraid he's...dead, sir.'  
>'You should be afraid.'  
>'Oh...I-I brought you this Stormcutter egg, sir...'  
>'Do you really think,' he began, with dangerous softness, 'that a Stormcutter egg replaces ONE OF MY MEN?!'  
>'N-no sir...But bringing dragons to you is part of my job...'  
>'I know that. I am not stupid. Were you suggesting I was?'  
>'O-of course not...'  
>'Good. Give the egg to me.'  
>I hastily took it out of my pocket. His scowl deepened.  
>'You stupid, stupid boy...' he growled, snatching the egg from me and placing it on the ground.  
>'Why am I stupid, sir?'  
>'Did I not teach you that you should never put dragon eggs in your pocket?'  
>'No, sir...why?'  
>'Stand back.' he ordered.  
>'Why, sir?'  
>'STAND BACK!' he screamed.  
>'Yes, sir.'  
>Almost immediately, the Stormcutter started bashing at the egg with

its beak, causing cracks to appear.<br>I looked at Drago's expression, and I regretted it.  
>He was smiling in a terrible leer of almost fatherly pride.<br>Suddenly, the egg exploded, sending flaming fragments around the forest. One landed on Drago's cape, and he brushed it off casually, as if having a flaming piece of egg on his shoulder was no big deal.  
>Other pieces landed near trees. Soon, the entire forest was ablaze. Drago just stood there, seemingly enjoying the destruction.<br>'Reminds me of what I did to the Chieftains...' he said happily.  
>'And what the dragons did to my village.' His voice turned bitter with terrifying abruptness.<br>'And what you, little Stormcutter, are going to do for me.'  
>He held the baby dragon, stroking him, his eyes gleaming.<br>It growled slightly, and bit his finger. Drago yelled in pain.  
>'A fighter, are you?' he snarled, between gritted teeth. 'We will find a use for that.'  
>Then he threw it off his finger, and it landed next to its mother.  
>The dying mother Stormcutter lifted her head as much as she could, and licked her baby. Drago grabbed hold of the little dragon, and laughed at the mother's attempts to get him back.<br>'You will not be seeing it again. That is your punishment for killing my best dragon trapper.'  
>He kicked her absent-mindedly as he passed her. She howled.<br>'In pain, are you?' he smiled. 'Do you want me to end it?'  
>He glanced at the hooked end of his staff, and shook his head.<br>'No. You will die a slow death, thinking of how I have snatched your baby.'  
>He chuckled menacingly at the baby Stormcutter.<br>'She is not your mother anymore. I am your new master. And your new father is my Bewilderbeast.'  
>The dragon whimpered at the mention of his new father, and king's, name.<br>'HAVE A NICE DEATH!' he called to the mother Stormcutter.  
  
>No answer came; not even a growl.<br>I walked over to her.  
>She was dead.<br>The men helped carry the body back at my instructions. Perhaps Drago could make her into a cape, and use her head as a decoration, I thought.

## 2. Dark Places

### **\*\*Chapter One: Dark Places\*\***

#### **\*\*The Baby Stormcutter's POV\*\***

I was roughly stuffed into a dark place. Dark places are usually comforting- they remind me of my mother's den. But this dark place smelt wrong; of dragons. Dead dragons. I thought sadly of my mother. Although I could not see, I decided to find out what this dark place was. I rubbed my head against it. It felt scaly. Perhaps I was inside a dragon's skin? My mother's skin? But no. I remembered. The human who had taken me had worn something that smelt like this. He had called it a 'cape'.

Then I realised.

How dare he! This human, slaughtering a noble beast of my species! That was bad enough. And then he actually dared to wear this beast's

hide, as a trophy of his victory! It seemed that many other dragons were a trophy of his victory too. His victory over them. They were still alive, too. This is the worst thing you can do to a dragon. To kill one is at least putting it out of further misery, but letting it live, to serve a human, when it would rather be dead than suffer, that is typical of humans.

Suddenly, I heard a snuffling sound, and I felt breath. A dragon was sniffing me out, trying to eat me. Then I heard the sound of sharp metal slicing into scales, and the dragon fell back with a thump and a shriek. I could hear it whimpering some distance away.

I noticed the human had stopped walking.

It screamed, 'HURRY UP!' at the dragon, and I heard the whack of metal against scales.

The human continued walking, the dragon following behind him.

Eventually, I could smell salt, and waves, and tasty seabirds. This reminded me of the place where my mother had gone hunting sometimes to catch fish. There were dragons living in the depths. Scauldrons, Seashockers, Thunderdrums, and...my mother had once told me of a dragon so huge that it dwarfed the others of its species living here. There were only a few left in existence. My mother had called it 'The King of the Ocean'.

And, incredibly, if I smelled hard enough, I could detect the scent of it. But it was yet another thing that smelt wrong. It smelt of rage and anger, which was strange; my mother had told me that these dragons were calm, good kings. This dragon did not smell calm, or good. It was almost as if it had once been calm and good, but something had made it like this. And, buried deep beneath that rage and anger, almost as deep as the sea floor itself, was sadness. Deep, unbearable, pathetic sadness. Misery. This smell reminded me of another thing. When the dragon had tried to sniff me, and laid on the ground, whimpering, it had smelt like that.

So, that meant, that 'The King of the Ocean' belonged to the human.

And now, so did I.

### 3. Meeting My New Father

**\*\*Chapter Two: Meeting My New Father\*\***

**\*\*The Baby Stormcutter's POV\*\***

The human took me out of his cape, and placed me on the ground. Then he raised his metal stick in the air, and swung it around his head, screaming at levels that were painful to my sensitive ears.

The King of the Ocean emerged out of the water, and walked onto the land. Upon seeing the fire, it inhaled, and put it out with a blast of its ice breath. This was one of its powers- it could breathe ice, a power unlike any other dragon's. There was another power it had, but I couldn't remember what it was.

And I was about to find out.

The King turned his mighty head around, and saw me. His eyes lit up with cruel delight.

\_A HATCHLING\_. \_SECURE IT\_.

Immediately, the dragon which had tried to sniff me went over to me. I noticed that it had five, long, red, bleeding gashes on its face.

\_Where did you get those\_?

\_Silence\_.

I was intelligent, like most dragons, so I realised that he had received them when his master had ripped into his scales.

He put a clawed paw over me, to act as a cage. I fitted more than well enough.

With one of those claws, he grabbed my chin and pushed my face up to the King's eyes.

I tried to get away, for the claws were piercing my chin slightly, but he was strong.

\_Do not move, little dragon. You will only make it worse for yourself if you try to resist him\_.

\_Resist him\_?

\_Resist his power.\_

He directed his thoughts to the King.

\_Is he prepared, Alpha\_?

\_Yes\_.

The dragon bowed.

Suddenly, a horrible sound entered my head. It sounded like...a song! I must forget about my mother. The Alpha is my father and King now. My eyesight turned red and cloudy. I had an urge that I had never had before.

To destroy, to kill, to tear apart anything that my Master commanded me to.

I had become a monster. A mere puppet, to carry out my Master's deeds.

And I liked it.

#### 4. Names

**\*\*Hey guys! I was away for a bit, so I didn't really have a chance to**

update. But I did type up a bit of the next chapter on Wordpad, so here you go! :D\*\*

\* \* \*

### <p><strong>Chapter Three: Names<strong>

\*\*The Baby Stormcutter's POV\*\*

\_So, you are one of us now, little dragon. \_the dragon said as he released me from his claws. The King retreated back into the ocean, his job done.

\_What is your name\_? I growled.

\_My name, little dragon\_? \_I do not have one\_.

\_Once\_. \_But not any more\_.

He sighed sadly, and his pupils flickered slightly.

I was grabbed by the neck, by his strong teeth, and I felt him wince slightly, from the five claw-marks on his face.

I noticed that he was not asked to- or ordered to- by his master. He seemed to know instinctively what to do. As if he had done this many times.

\_Are there any other new dragonlings\_?

\_No\_. \_You are the only one\_. \_And Master was not pleased\_. \_The men who brought you here were punished for their failure\_.

He carried me up to the deck of the nearby ship, and yowled, not unlike a cat, when Master kicked him.

I was dropped onto the deck.

\_Follow me\_.

He led me across the deck, crammed with cages of eerily silent dragons. They were not screaming, screeching, or growling, in fear or terror, as they should have been. Perhaps they sensed their Master's presence.

Eventually, he stopped at a cage that was no different to any of the others. He crawled into the one next to it; presumably his, and gestured for me to do the same.

Suddenly, I saw Master's figure, hitting his staff against the cages. The sound hurt my ears.

The other dragons clearly did not like it either, because they roared in protest.

To the ones that did this, my Master put the hooked end of his staff into their cage, and gave them a gash. They were silent immediately.

He made a noise of satisfaction.

Then he started to walk towards me.

Although I knew I could not roar, I started shaking in terror. He seemed pleased at that.

'You are right to be afraid in my presence, dragon...' he snarled, putting his staff inside the cage.

This did not improve my shaking. He gave me a gash, like the other dragons, even though I did not roar. This seemed to be his way of saying that I was the same as them now.

'Now, sleep.' he growled, kicking the cage as he walked off.

## 5. The Thoughts of a Dragon Trapper

**\*\*Chapter Four: The Thoughts of a Dragon Trapper\*\***

**\*\*The Leader of the Dragon Trappers' POV\*\***

I walked to our cabin, with my men following behind me. I tried to ignore the dragons' sad, rumbling snores. They looked so miserable. I sighed, and turned my face away.

My head ached from Drago's screaming. I was so glad to get into my bed, which now had a dragon skin cover, because I was the leader now. I glanced sadly at the bed next to mine, which was empty. The previous occupant of that bed, had his own bed, with the gods. And he was sleeping. Permanently.

Horvutah's bed had the mother Stormcutter's skin as a cover. Above the bed, her head was nailed.

What had he said?

\_Don't kill the mother Stormcutter for this\_.

Well, at least he wasn't around to see her die. He wouldn't have wanted that. He loved dragons, but he had had no choice to do what he had to, when the Stormcutter was going to kill him.

I was pleased that Drago had at least had the respect to give his best dragon trapper a funeral. It was a Viking one, nonetheless, the same death he had given the Chieftains, but it was still a funeral.

He had, after all, lost his family in the same way. Perhaps that was why he didn't look back when the body was burning. He didn't want to be reminded.

However, back on the ship, he seemed more furious that he had lost one of his best dragon trappers, because Horvutah was, well, the best, and not because he had died.

Nonetheless, we were screamed at for about half an hour.

And, eventually we went back to our cabin, which I wrote about at the beginning of this chapter. And here I am now, talking to you, whoever



you are, about my thoughts.

Anyway, I'm sure you don't want to hear the thoughts of a dragon trapper any longer. In that case, I blew my candle out, and went to sleep, listening to the lullaby of dragons' snoring.

## 6. Naming and Training

**\*\*Chapter Five: Naming and Training\*\***

**\*\*The Baby Stormcutter's POV\*\***

I was awoken by the Alpha's roar. I knew I could not disobey his call, so I flew over to him.

Thousands and thousands of dragons were next to him, in his throne room, bowing to their King.

I looked around awkwardly, not sure where to go.

\_Go with the hatchlings, little dragon\_. a familiar voice said in my head. It was the one with the claw marks on his face.

\_AHRAAN\_! a huge voice yelled.

\_My deepest apologies, Alpha\_. he resumed to bowing.

My father ignored him.

\_YOU! HATCHLING! WHY ARE YOU NOT BOWING\_?!

\_I apologize, sir- my king, Alpha\_...

\_IT IS GOOD THAT YOU ARE REMORSEFUL, HATCHLING, FOR IF YOU WERE NOT, I WOULD HAVE SUSPECTED THAT YOU WERE DEFYING MY COMMAND\_.

\_No, Alpha, of course not. I am too loyal\_.

\_GOOD. NOW, BOW\_!

I did so immediately.

A huge claw picked me up, and put me to eye level with my father.

I gulped.

\_WHAT IS YOUR NAME, MY SON\_?

I was so absorbed in his mesmerising eyes, I did not hear the question.

\_WHAT IS YOUR NAME\_?! he repeated, shaking me in his claw, causing the world to spin.

\_I do not have one, Alpha\_.

\_THEN I SHALL NAME YOU- THRALIIK\_.

\_Thank you, Alpha\_.

\_BUT THAT WAS NOT THE ONLY REASON I WISHED TO TALK TO YOU TODAY. YOU SEE, MY MASTER IS ON A VOYAGE TO A NEARBY VILLAGE, TO RECRUIT A NEW DRAGON TRAPPER\_.

When he said those last two words, there was a hint of sadness in his eyes, overriding the rage. My dragon-brothers' eyes did the same, perhaps remembering that those people were the ones that had brought them here.

\_AND SO, BECAUSE MY MASTER IS NOT PRESENT TO DO THIS HIMSELF, HE COMMANDED ME TO SEND YOU OUT ON YOUR FIRST TRAINING MISSION\_.

\_And what is this training mission, Alpha\_?

\_THERE IS, AS YOU KNOW, A LARGE POPULATION OF DRAGONS RAIDING A SMALL VIKING VILLAGE KNOWN AS BERK. YOUR MISSION IS TO RECRUIT THEM. THE VIKINGS, I EXPECT, WILL BE RATHER PLEASED THAT YOU HAVE REMOVED THEIR THREAT- BUT NOT SO PLEASED WHEN THEY ARE CONQUERED BY THEM, ONCE THEY JOIN MY MASTER'S DRAGON ARMY.\_

He smiled in twisted glee at this.

When do I depart, Alpha?

\_NOW\_! he roared, and released me from his claws, into the air, and my training mission.

## 7. The Nest

**\*\*Hey guys! I'm back! As usual, I'll post a new chapter daily, as I've written quite a few on Wordpad! So, here's Chapter Six!\*\***

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Chapter Six: The Nest<strong>

**\*\*Thrallik's POV\*\***

I flew on silent wings to Berk. On the way, I saw a huge volcano. I presumed that it must be a Nest of some kind, completely the opposite of my King's icy one. There was a strange, humming sound emitting from deep within it, sounding like a song. Perhaps the dragon inside was an Alpha? I wondered. I decided against this though, as if the dragon was an Alpha, its song- which appeared to be a call- would be too powerful to overcome. I was able to fly past the Nest quite freely, though- which is more than can be said for the dragon's servants. The sky was black with dragons, flying to Berk.

>I passed by one, a Deadly Nadder. It did not see me. It did not notice anything, only the route to Berk in its trance-like quest.<br>I managed to read its thoughts.

><em>Gather food for the Queen<em>. \_Gather food for the Queen\_.

>Curious, I inquired:<br>\_Who is this Queen that you speak of? \_Is she an Alpha, by any chance\_?

>It squawked in surprise when it saw me, and squawked even louder when it realized that I was reading its thoughts.<br>This alerted the attention of a huge Monstrous Nightmare, who was, I assumed, the leader of the raiding party.

><em>You<em>! \_Stormcutter! \_Who are you? \_I do not recognize you from the Nest\_.  
 ><em>I am Thraliik<em>, \_and my Alpha belongs to a human who calls himself Drago\_.  
 >The Nightmare snorted, steam coming out of its nostrils.<br>\_Your Alpha belongs to a human?!  
 ><em>Yes<em>. \_He does\_. I said haughtily.  
 ><em>So<em>, \_your Alpha\_, he laughed, \_your Alpha has lowered himself to having a master\_, \_and a human at that?! \_Has he no shame?!  
 ><em>If my master was here<em>, \_he would make you into a cape for that insult\_.  
 ><em>Would he<em>?! \_Where is he?! he snorted.  
 ><em>He is not here at the moment<em>. \_He has taken his army to a nearby village\_, \_to recruit a new dragon trapper\_.  
 >The Nightmare stopped laughing.<br>\_He has an army?  
 ><em>Yes<em>. \_A human and dragon one\_. \_Big enough to take your Nest\_, \_and add all the dragons to their ranks\_.  
 ><em>Is that a threat<em>? he snarled.  
 ><em>If you join us<em>, \_we will not conquer your Nest\_. \_But if you refuse\_, \_my master will tear you from the sky\_, \_and make you bow at his feet\_.  
 >He started whimpering now.<br>\_Alright\_, \_alright\_. I will tell my raiding party to follow you\_, \_back to wherever you came from\_. \_On one condition\_.  
 ><em>And what is this condition<em>?  
 ><em>We bring the Dragon Master to your master<em>.

## 8. The Master of Dragons

\*\*\*\*I haven't updated in a day or so (I've actually been updating Fireproof :O) so, here you go; Chapter Seven! :D\*\*\*\*

\*\*Chapter Seven: The Master of Dragons \*\*

\*\*Thraliik's POV\*\*

><em>So<em>, \_who is this\_ "\_Dragon Master\_" \_that you speak of?

><em>There is a prophecy within our Nest<em>, \_that says that a Viking boy will tame a Night Fury\_, \_and defeat our Queen\_. \_She\_, \_of course\_, \_does not believe it\_.  
 ><em>How old is the Dragon Master now<em>?  
 ><em>He is not yet one year old<em>, \_and the humans call him\_ '\_Hiccup\_'\_. \_I think he is what the humans refer to as a\_ '\_runt\_'\_.  
 ><em>And if he is not yet one year old<em>, \_his mother and father will be protective over him\_.  
 ><em>Yes<em>. \_Very\_. \_I have already met the father\_, '\_Stoick the Vast\_'\_. \_He appears to be the Alpha of the village\_, \_the\_ '\_Chief\_'\_. \_Our meetings were\_, \_obviously\_, \_not pleasant\_.  
 ><em>Ah<em>. \_That is unfortunate\_. \_We may need to take some measures\_- my mouth formed a bloodthirsty grin- \_to ensure he does not kill us\_.  
 ><em>That is correct<em>. \_What are your orders\_, \_Thraliik?

><em>Stay here<em>, \_while I find the boy's house\_.  
 >The Nightmare growled in agreement.<p>

\* \* \*

><p>I flew into the village on silent wings, blasting some fire at the Alpha's throne room, which the Nightmare told me was the 'Great Hall'.<br>Vikings yelled in horror.  
>"GET THE BUCKETS!" a voice yelled.<br>Immediately, water was poured onto the Great Hall. I flew past, pleased that I had distracted the Alpha and his subjects for the moment.  
>A hut, bigger than the others, came into view. This was where Hiccup lived. I entered easily, the only way I knew how- by burning down the door. Once inside, I quickly snuffed the flames out with my wings. I did not want to burn the boy to death.<br>A wailing cry alerted me, and I smiled grimly. Hiccup knew I was here.  
>I followed the sound of his crying, until I reached his cradle. Inside was a tiny baby boy, with brown hair and green eyes.<br>My claws flicked out, and I prepared to grab the cradle.  
>But something stopped me.<br>No, it was not his parents. It was my conscience, finally breaking through the Alpha's control.  
>My eyesight cleared slightly, and turned a little less red and cloudy.<br>How could I do this? How could I deliver a defenceless baby boy to my master, and his death? My master would certainly kill the boy. He didn't want there to be any other dragon masters, apart from him.  
>It was then that I decided that I would not serve Drago, or the Bewilderbeast, anymore.<br>But it was not just that, that helped me to decide that.  
>'HEY! GET AWAY FROM HIM!' a voice roared.<br>I turned around- but I had forgotten to withdraw my claws, and accidentally cut Hiccup on the cheek.  
>This only made the huge, red-bearded man in front of me angrier. He started to walk towards me, an axe in his hand.<br>It was then that I realised that this man was the Chief of Berk, the Alpha.  
>My sight misted red again, and I growled.<p>

## 9. Taken, and Saved

\*\*I'm breaking this chapter up into sections, because of how big it is!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Chapter Eight - Taken, and Saved<strong>

\*\*Thrallik's POV\*\*

>Stoick continued to walk towards me. I walked out of the house, and did the same, so that he was forced back.<br>I pushed him into a wall, so he could not go anywhere. I readied my fire.

>And suddenly, a smaller shape than Stoick stepped in front of him. She had brown hair, and green eyes, like Hiccup, and even the same build. I guessed she was his mother.<br>"Don't hurt him!" she shouted.

>Even though I wanted to, I could not. I was obeying a human once again. All my life- at least until I was kidnapped- I had been forced to do this, to obey a human.<br>\_KILL THE TINY HUMAN\_. the Bewilderbeast's voice said inside my head.

>My sight misted red, deeper than it had ever gone before. He was panicking, struggling to control me, so he was doing it harder than ever.<br>My head started to hurt as I tried to resist him, but failed. His voice filled my head, confusing me.

>Finally, I could see clearly. Right in front of me, was Hiccup's

mother.<br>In my confusion, I grabbed her in my claws, and took off.

>"VALKA!"<br>So, that was her name.

>"STOICK!"<br>\_Thraliik\_! \_Where are you going?! the Monstrous Nightmare shouted.

><em>Go to the Bewilderbeast<em>, \_and tell him I am not serving him\_, \_or Drago anymore\_. I told him, as I flew out of earshot.

\* \* \*

><p>"W-where are you taking me?!" Valka stammered.<br>\_Be quiet\_. I told her. I did not need her confusing my brain any further.

>But, to tell the truth, I didn't actually know, myself. The Bewilderbeast had sent me mad, it seemed, flying around in demented circles.<br>Suddenly, I heard a call. I panicked, and wondered if it was \_his\_ call. I wouldn't be able to resist if it was...

>But no. It was a different call, kinder.<br>\_Come to me\_. \_I will guide you\_. the call said.

>Before I knew what I was doing, my wings were flying me towards the sound.<br>We came to a huge ice-Nest, much like the other Bewilderbeast's. I dived downward, until I saw a small opening in the ice, the entrance, I presumed.

\* \* \*

><p>Thousands of dragons greeted us, some flying about, some inspecting me.<br>One dragon, smaller than the others, a baby, growled.

><em>Smells bad<em>, \_smells bad\_. it whimpered.

><em>Come now, young one<em>. the Bewilderbeast laughed. \_Leave our newcomer alone\_.

><em>Yes, Father<em>! it squeaked obediently, and ran over to him, nuzzling him lovingly.

>I had completely forgotten, while this had been going on, that I still had Valka in my claws. As a result, my grip had loosened, and she managed to wriggle out.<br>She laid her hand on my snout. A pair of huge, kind, blue eyes came to see us.

>I turned my head to the Bewilderbeast's eyes, and I soon became lost in them.<br>By the time he had brought me to my senses, I noticed that my eyesight was completely clear. I could see properly now. Everything I saw was no longer tinged with red.

>And I was free.<br>I went over to the Bewilderbeast, relieved to be safe now, and laid down and slept.

>I did not notice it, for by then, I was fast asleep, but after a while, Valka came and laid next to me. I subconsciously enwrapped her in my wings, to act as a blanket of sorts.<p>

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Valka's POV<strong>

>"<em>THEY'VE KILLED HUNDREDS OF US<em>!" \_Stoick roared\_, \_practically tearing his beard out\_.

>"<em>And we've killed thousands of them<em>!" \_I shouted back\_, \_although I knew I could never yell as loudly as him\_.

><em>He stepped back slightly<em>.

>'<em>They defend themselves, that's all<em>!" \_I continued\_.

><em>As usual<em>, \_Stoick disagreed\_. \_And this time\_, \_I had had enough\_.

><em>I ran after him<em>, \_and grabbed onto his huge\_, \_hairy arm\_.

>'<em>For once in your life<em>, \_would you please just listen to me\_?!' \_I yelled\_, \_sobbing with desperation\_.  
><em>He threw me back<em>, \_onto the hard stone floor\_, \_and turned around\_.  
>'<em>You're not a Viking<em>,' \_he snarled\_, '\_and you're not my wife\_.'  
><em>He slammed the door<em>, \_and everything went black\_.

\* \* \*

><p>I woke up, and found myself looking at the dragon's orange scales.<br>He purred reassuringly, the sound reverberating into my ears.  
><em>It was just a nightmare<em>,\_ mistress\_.  
>'Was it a Monstrous one?' I joked.<br>\_I should think so\_. he replied, doing his equivalent of a laugh.  
><em>Now, go back to sleep<em>.  
>I buried my face deeper into his scales, and whispered.<br>'You're right. Goodnight...Cloudjumper.'  
>I drifted off to sleep again, knowing that I would be happy in this place, and I had nothing and nobody to fear, as long as Cloudjumper was with me.<p>

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Drago's POV<strong>  
>I saw the distant outline of the nearby village, and growled.<br>"We're here."  
>The ships crashed onto the beach. It was a long way down, but I swung myself over the side of my ship, and landed on the sand.<br>Suddenly, a noise made me glance up to the sky.  
>At my command, a bolas seized the dragon, and brought it down to my feet.<br>'Where you belong.' I snarled, placing my foot onto it.

>'What are you doing here, dragon?!'<br>\_I was sent here by the Stormcutter\_.  
>'Where is it?'<br>\_Well\_, \_that is the thing\_. \_He\_- \_he kind of told me to tell you that he would not\_-  
>The beast flinched under my glare.<br>-\_be serving you\_, \_or the Bewilderbeast anymore\_.  
>'<em>He<em> won't. But \_you\_ will.' I growled, throwing it into a cage.  
>"Um- sir?' one of my soldiers asked.<br>'What?!' I snapped.  
>'So- so are we going to get the Stormcutter back?'<br>'No. Not yet. The army is not big enough. But when it is, the Stormcutter will not be the only thing I am taking back.' My eyes gleamed at the thought.

>'What are we doing now, sir?' the soldier asked.<br>'We are conquering a village. Now, shut up, and WALK!' I screamed.  
>'Y-yes, sir."the soldier stammered.<br>I growled once again, thinking of what fun I would have, conquering the village.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Fun fact: :P<br>Originally, Stoick said, "You're not my Val." I thought it would have more emotional impact, :P if he called her Val. But, thanks to a suggestion from BerserkDragon, ;) he now says "You're not my wife."\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>ReeseXx: Sure! :D<strong>

## 10. Visitors

**\*\*Eret's POV\*\***

>"Eret! Come here!" my father said. I got out of bed, and went into the main room, where he was sitting on his Chiefly throne, as he liked to call it.<br>"Yes, Father?"<br>>'The sentries have told me that they saw several ships landing on our beach. The men that were sighted are making their way up here now. I am going to sort it out, and you are not to follow me outside.'  
>'Yes, Father.'

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Eret, Father of Eret's POV<strong><br>>I grabbed a few weapons before I went outside, in case these 'visitors' were hostile. Then I opened the door, and walked out, warily.<br>In the centre of the village, there was a circle of men. The 'visitors', I presumed.<br>>Furious, I marched over to them, pushing them aside.<br>'Listen, if you think you can just walk into my village-'<br>>I gasped when I saw the man in the centre of the crowd.<br>In the shadowy night, just before dawn, he looked nothing more than a huge shape, dressed in a dragonskin cape.<br>>But then dawn came, and illuminated him in all his terrible glory.<br>The first thing you notice about a man are his eyes. And this man had eyes that were very noticeable indeed.<br>>Cold, cruel eyes. As grey as the stormy sea. And yet, there was sadness in them. As if he had lost something, or someone once.<br>And, suddenly, I remembered who it was. My messenger had told me, thirty or so years ago, that a nearby village had burned down, as the result of a dragon attack, and the dragons had killed everyone. Everyone, except a young boy. He had lost everything.

>That young boy was this man.<br>'Bludvist...' I gasped.<br>>The man did not speak for a long time. But when he did, the 'visitors' parted. I presumed that he must have been in a position of authority to them.<br>"I have a first name, Eret." he said quietly-but there was a hint of menace to his tone.<br>>'<em>Drago</em>...' I amended, sulkily.<br>>He nodded, pleased at this.<br>'It is an honour to have the man, who murdered the Viking Chieftains, pay a visit to my village.' I said sarcastically.<br>>'Thank you.' he said stiffly, as if he was trying not to strangle me right then and there.<br>'So, why are you here?' I asked.<br>>As if in answer, my son opened the door to my house, and stumbled out. He gasped when he saw me.<br>Perhaps it was just the sun glittering in his eyes, but I thought Drago's gleamed for a second.

>'So,' he said, 'you have a son, Eret?'<br>'Which one are you talking to?' I laughed jokingly. He did not appear to have a sense of humour.

>'Yes, I do.' I replied, realising that it was useless to make any attempt to joke with him.<br>'I think the boy would make an excellent dragon trapper.'  
>'But, Drago, he does not know how to trap dragons.'  
>'He will

learn,' he said in that voice with a hint of menace. '\_he will learn\_...'  
>'And what if I refused to employ him to you?'<br>'Well...' he glanced meaningfully at some dragons nearby, who were snarling at me. When they saw that he was looking at them, they were immediately silent.  
>'How did you do that?' I asked, in fascinated horror.<br>'The answer is simple. You do the same thing to the people of your village, do you not?'  
>'Yes...' I admitted.<br>'Then it is the same with dragons.'  
  
>'Right.'<br>'They obey me, like your people obey you. All I would have to do is just tell them, and-'  
>By now, he had a very nasty grin on his face. He looked at the dragons, and then at me, as if to tell them something.<br>'\_Destroy him\_' he whispered, so quietly that only the dragons, who had hearing far better than humans, could hear him.  
>'<em>But take the boy alive<em>.'

## 11. Running

**\*\*Eret's POV\*\***

>I turned around, and sped off towards the woods. I knew, that since they had just arrived here, they would not know their way around. I, however had been living in this village for twenty years, and knew these woods better than anyone.<br>Branches snagged my skin, and my furs as I was running past, ripping into them. I hardly noticed- I just wanted to get as far away from those dragons as possible.

>Suddenly, I heard a dragon's shriek of discovery- like a hawk spotting a rabbit. I had seen that happening often.<br>\_We've got him\_!

>I couldn't understand Dragonese, but I guessed roughly what the dragon was saying.<br>I forced myself not to look up, as its shadow came onto the ground. Sharp claws grazed my arms.

>I screamed in pain and horror.<br>The dragon squawked in surprise, and immediately dropped me, sending me plummeting down.

>This only made me scream more.<br>The ground was coming up fast, and I was terrified that I was going to hit it.

>Unhurriedly, the dragon flew over to me, and grabbed me in its claws once again.<br>\_Now\_, \_I don't want you struggling and screaming when I bring you to Master \_- \_that would make a bad impression\_ - \_so this will keep you quiet\_.

>I heard a sound-<br>\_ZING\_! \_ZING\_!

>-and sharp things sliced into my arms. This time, I didn't scream, because I knew what these things were- spines from the dragon's tail- and I wouldn't have enough time to stop before I passed out.<br>So, instead, I clamped my mouth shut, telling myself not to scream, despite knowing that the sleep-inducing poison had already entered my bloodstream by now, and eventually, the darkness came, and I felt myself going down- not just into darkness, but towards the ground.

>The last thing I heard was a huge, loud, booming voice, echoing all around the wood, it seemed.<br>"Now you know what it is like, to lose everything, to have everything taken from you, boy..."

## 12. My New Boss



**\*\*Chapter Eleven: My New Boss \*\***

**\*\*Eret's POV \*\***

I opened my eyes slowly. When my eyes focused, I realised that I was on a ship. Dragons were in cages everywhere, and men were armed with swords, and other weapons, presumably in case I tried to attack them. I tried to get up, but I couldn't. The reason for this was clear when I saw that my hands and feet were tied up with rope.

Automatically, I reached for my sword to cut the ropes, but it wasn't in its scabbard.

>"Where's my sword?' I demanded furiously.<br>"The less you know, the better.' a man said, who was standing in front of me. He was six-foot-ten, and he wore a dragonskin cape.

>I knew instantly by this clothing, that this man was in a position of authority here. My father was the only person I knew who wore a dragonskin cape too.<br>My father.

>'Where is my father?''<br>The man's eyes narrowed. He walked up to me, bearing his full height over me.

>'Let me tell you something, boy: I, Drago Bludvist, do not like it when people ask unnecessary questions. And when I do not like something...''<br>A cruel smile spread over his face.

>'...you will pay for it. But, if you really do want to know what I did to your father-''<br>He held up a bloodied cape.

>'No-''<br>'Yes, boy. I killed your father. I killed the almighty Chieftain of your village. I have the power to do that. Now that I have taken away everything from you, as the dragons did to me, will you obey me?'

>I glared at him defiantly.<br>'No.'

>He did not explode into a rage, as I had expected- in fact, he seemed to have been prepared for this to happen. Calmly, he drew out something from his cape- his other arm.<br>That seemed perfectly normal.

>But what was attached to the arm, was not.<br>A dragon's paw, complete with claws, 'fingers', glinting cruelly in the sun.

>I intook my breath sharply.<br>He smiled at my terror.

>'Yes, boy. You are right to be afraid. For many young lads like you, were not scared of me. But when they saw this, they knew better. And look at them now.'<br>I turned around, and saw three men, probably only a few years older than me.

>'My best dragon trappers.'<br>I did not like the way he said 'my'.

>Despite the cruel mockery in his voice, there was a hint of pride.<br>'Unfortunately, their leader was murdered a few days ago, by a Stormcutter. She paid for it with her life. My trappers captured her son- but it has escaped. And that is where you come in. You will go with your new family, and my newest recruit-'

>A Monstrous Nightmare obediently slunk over, and sat by his feet. He kicked it.<br>'-to track it down.'

>I was still staring at the dragon.<br>'It is a very good tracker dragon, and it seems to know the Stormcutter. So it is the best one to take.'

>'And in response to your defiance, boy...yes...''<br>He clawed me around the cheek. Blood dripped onto the deck of the ship.

>'...You will obey me.'<br>Then he pushed me roughly, to join the dragon trappers.

>I noticed that one of them was wearing a piece of string around his neck, and it had a metal disc, with a Stormcutter symbol, attached to

it.<br>When he saw me looking at it, he smiled sadly, as opposed to the glares the others were giving me.  
>'It's a tradition to give the second-in-command this, in the symbol of the dragon his leader was killed by.' he explained.<br>'Wow.' I gasped.  
>He laughed.<br>'Yes, I suppose a young lad like you would think that. But it's just normal to me. I've been doing this job for three years, after all.'  
>He sighed sadly.<br>'You're lucky, lad. When Drago recruited me- the same way you were- I didn't have a friend to take care of me. I just had him.'  
>His expression changed, into one of disgust, and sadness.<br>'And, let me tell you, he's not a good friend at all.' he whispered, so Drago hopefully did not hear.  
>But he did.<br>He turned around, and glared at the trapper, through stormy, grey eyes.  
>This seemed to be the equivalent to a claw around the face. The trapper turned away, and Drago grunted in satisfaction.<br>'When he does that, it's his way of saying, "I'm going to get you later". And Drago is a man who means what he says-'  
>'Clever boy.' Drago mocked.<br>'-And I should know.'  
>This didn't make me feel any better- but it probably wasn't intended to.<br>'That thing you said earlier- about not having a friend to take care of you, when Drago recruited you- do you mean that you're my friend?'  
>'Seems like we're both "clever boys".' he laughed.<br>'Of course I'm your friend, lad!'  
>He patted me on the shoulder, nearly choking me. He ignored this.<br>'You have to make some friends in this place if you want to make it through. You know why? Friends can protect you from dragons- and Drago. My crew would gladly die for me, wouldn't you, lads?'  
  
>They mumbled, 'yes'.<br>'Ignore them. They're just shy. But do you know why they would die for me? Because I'm nice to them- something Drago wouldn't understand. I don't treat them like he treats his dragons, if you know what I mean.'  
>'STOP TALKING, AND GO!' Drago roared.<br>'Sorry, sir...'  
>'You should be.'  
>'Come on, lad.' The trapper took me by the arm, and examined it.  
>'Hm. You don't have many muscles yet. I hope you're not what the Vikings call a 'Hiccup'. Don't worry. A few years of doing this, and you'll have 'em soon! Name's Ziist, by the way. I'm twenty-six.'  
>'Oh. Good to know.' I smiled.  
>'Now, come on, let's go now- for real.'  
>He patted me on the shoulder again.  
>'He's always hard on the new ones, lad.' he said, as we were walking off.<br>'But, after a while, he becomes almost fond of you.'  
  
>'Yeah, only because you're doing his dirty work for him.' I muttered.<p>

### 13. Drago's Plan

#### \*\*Chapter Twelve - Drago's Plan\*\*

##### \*\*Eret's POV\*\*

>Ziist led me off Drago's ship, the other trappers following behind.<br>"In case you couldn't tell, lad, that's not the only ship he has. But not all of them are his.'

>He continued to lead me through the shipyard, the shouts of men, the clanking of chains, the screeching of dragons, and the sound of the sea, echoing around.<br>But wait. That didn't sound like the sea. I listened harder, trying to focus my ears on that particular sound, trying to tune out everything else.

>It sounded like there was something <em>living</em> under the sea. There was a pocket of bubbles, continuously moving, which confirmed this.

>When I asked Ziist what it was, he didn't respond in the friendly manner I was expecting. He pulled me away angrily.<br>'No, Eret-' for once using my actual name, not just, 'lad'.

>'-Don't look at it. Drago won't be pleased if you ask questions about it.'<br>'Why? Is it a secret?'

>'Yes. And that's the point- you're not supposed to tell secrets. And I don't even know, myself. And they certainly don't.'<br>He gestured to the other trappers.

>'You're just saying that!'<br>'No, I'm not!' he snapped, pushing me forward roughly. Then he sighed, defeated.

>'Okay. Drago will probably kill me for saying this- and that's not an exaggeration- but-'<br>He lowered his voice.

>'It's his secret weapon. You see all these dragons here?'<br>It was hard not to, they were screaming so loud.

>'That dragon under the water, that's a Bewilderbeast- the Alpha species.'<br>I gasped excitedly.

>'My father told me about those dragons, you know, before...' I trailed off sadly.<br>'...before Drago killed him...'

>'I know, lad. But, back to what I was saying- when it's old enough, this Bewilderbeast will control all the dragons, and Drago can make his dragon army.'<br>'Wow!'

>'And so that's why I'm stuck here, travelling around the world in my ship, capturing dragons for him.'<br>He stopped at a ship, which was a boat, compared to Drago's warship. I guessed that this was his.

>'Come on. Let me show you around.' he said, grabbing my arm, and hauling me over the side.<p>

## 14. Ziist's Ship

### **\*\*Chapter Thirteen - Ziist's Ship\*\***

#### **\*\*Eret's POV\*\***

>'Wow...' I gasped, once Ziist had pulled me onto the ship, and I was able to look around.<br>Weapons were attached to the side of the ship, and there were nets, containing dragon traps, hanging from them.

>'She's a nice ship, isn't she?' Ziist said.<br>'Sure is.' I agreed, trying to say as little as possible; talking had become painful, due to the claw-mark on my face.

>Ziist walked up to me, sensing I was in pain, and inspected my wound carefully.<br>'Come on. Let's go below deck. We'll need to check that out, before it gets infected, gods forbid.'

>He led me down a set of rickety old stairs, which had nets filled with dragon traps hanging from the banisters.<br>We arrived in a room, which had five beds. I noticed that the beds all had animal pelts for covers- except for one, which was dragonskin.

>'I'm guessing that's your bed?'<br>'Yep. That cover was made from the first ever dragon I killed- a Monstrous Nightmare. Nobody else has a cover like mine- it's a sign of my authority, as I'm the leader of the trappers.'

>'Wow, Ziist! So, this is were you and the others live?'<br>'Well...when we're at sea. But we do have a fort, on land, which is where we're sailing to. But, seriously, we need to get that wound checked out.'

>'Ziist, I'm fine.'<br>But he wouldn't hear of it.

>'Now, come and lie down on my bed, Eret, so I can have a better look at it.'<br>I did as he said, realising that he was going to check it out, no matter how much I protested.

>'Right. You're lucky, lad. It's on the brink of infection. And if it did get infected, you wouldn't be able to come trapping. And Drago wouldn't like that. Anyway, I'll put some herbs onto it.'<br>He went over to a cupboard, by his bed, and got some herbs, and a pestle and mortar, and sat beside me on the bed, mashing up the herbs into a paste.

>'How do you know all this stuff, Ziist?'<br>'I was the \_zuwuth\_'s son.'

>'So your father was the village elder, and healer. What was his name?'<br>'His name was Vahraniik, gods rest his soul.'

>Vahraniik. I was sure I recognised that name.<br>'Did he happen to know anybody called Eret? He was my father. You know, Eret, son of Eret, and all that.'

>'Yes, he did, actually. Your father was his best friend.'<br>'Really?!!'

>'Yep. So I guess it's more than a coincidence that we're friends too!'<br>'Yeah!'

>'Well, I guess they're happy with the gods now.'<br>I nodded sadly.

>Suddenly, Ziist's tone turned serious.<br>'Now, listen, lad. I've got something to tell you. I don't know about healing just because I was the \_zuwuth\_'s son. I know about it from bitter experience too.'

>'Tell me more.'<br>In answer, he held up his hand. In horror, I noticed that he'd lost a few fingers, and had replaced them with Monstrous Nightmare claws.

>'These are from the first Monstrous Nightmare that I killed. Do you want to know how I lost them?'<br>I nodded, intrigued.

>'Well, I was testing out a new trap I'd just made in the forge. And this was my first one. So, not knowing how dangerous traps are, I was just putting on the finishing touches, and... SNAP!'<br>I jumped in surprise.

>'I'd lost a few fingers. The jaws of the trap were covered with blood. When I got back, Drago wasn't too pleased. I asked him to help me, but he wouldn't, because in his opinion, I shouldn't have been foolish enough to do it anyway. And for once, he was right. But his other reason was, when he lost his arm, he didn't have anyone to help him with it, so why should I? And I said, "Because you're my boss." Then he went up close to me, and took his dragon hand out of his cape, and said, "I won't help you with your fingers. But I will give you this, boy." and he clawed me around the face.'<br>Ziist put his face next to mine, and traced the faint marks of the scar.

>'That took three years to heal. I hope it doesn't take yours that long. But, at least it'll make you look tough, and make up for your scrawny arms!' he laughed.<br>'Yeah, I guess so.' I mumbled, not too pleased about his 'scrawny arms' comment.

>He glanced down at the mortar.<br>'Ah! I was so busy talking, I didn't notice that the herbs are already in a paste now.'

>Scraping it out with his fingers, he placed the paste onto my wound. I winced, and gasped when he started to rub it in.<br>'Eret, I have to do it hard, or the paste won't get into the wound. And it'll hurt a lot more than this if it gets infected.'

>'Mm.' I gasped.<br>What seemed like hours later, he'd finished.

>'There. Done. You can get up now.'  
>Once I was standing up, I automatically touched the wound.

>'Don't!' Ziist snapped. 'The germs from your fingers will get into the wound, and stop the herbs healing it.'  
>I immediately jerked my hand away, surprised at his reaction.

>Suddenly, heavy footsteps came running down the stairs, and one of the trappers rushed to Ziist.<br>'What is it, Hir?'

>'Land ahoy, sir!'  
>'Don't call me, sir, lad.'

>'Don't call me 'lad'.' Hir muttered.<br>Ziist raised his eyebrows in mock disbelief.

>'Is that any way to talk to your leader, Hir? I could tell Drago about this, you know.'  
>Hir was clearly stupid, because he didn't understand that Ziist was joking. Although he was a tall man, at Ziist's threat, he looked very small.

>'No, sir, please, no.' he begged, whimpering like a puppy in terror.<br>Ziist's stern face broke into a smile.

>'I'm joking, Hir! Of course I wouldn't tell him! That'd be a waste of a good dragon trapper.' he added ominously.<br>At the news that he was not going to die, Hir's face broke into a smile, too.

>'Oh, thank you, sir!'  
>'Now, don't grovel, Hir. I don't like grovellers. But Drago does. Now, go. We'll follow behind you.'

>He saluted Ziist, and headed back up the stairs, but not before looking back at me mockingly, and making a noise which sounded like a sneer.<p>

## 15. The Fort

**\*\*Eret's POV\*\***

>I followed Ziist off the ship, and onto a beach. Ahead stood a grim, dark-looking fort. As we got closer, I heard shouts of recognition.<br>'Hey, Ziist! How're you doing?' one man, presumably a fellow trapper, smiled, and patted him on the back warmly.

>'I'm fine.' he said tiredly.<br>'Tired from the voyage, eh? You got here just in time. Drago wants the dragon quota filled in five days. Luckily, we've been filling it while you were gone. But I'm sure, now that you're here, we'll have no trouble satisfying him, since you're the best dragon trapper alive.'

>He'd been so busy talking, he didn't even notice me- or maybe he was just pretending I didn't exist. I've gotten used to that.<br>'Who's this little runt, then?'

>'I'm not a little runt, I'm Eret, son of Eret.'  
>'Oh, you're a feisty one, aren't you, telling me your official title!' he sneered.

>'Listen, Sok, both me and the lad are just tired.'  
>'I know that, Ziist. Now, come with me, and I'll show Eret, \_son of Eret\_, to his room.'

>He led us up the wooden ramps around the fort. They had no barriers, worryingly. We passed cages of screaming dragons, and rooms where other trappers were eating, or talking. Ziist waved to them as we walked past, and they did the same.<br>Finally, we reached the very top of the fort. I swallowed, and tried hard not to look down. There was a house here, bigger than any of the others which were built into the walls of the fort, and dragon heads were attached to spikes on either side of the house.

>'I'm guessing these are the first dragons that you killed too?' I asked Ziist.<br>'Yep.' he replied.

>'Right then, Ziist, I guess I'll go now, and show Eret to his

room.'  
>We all said goodnight to each other, and once Ziist had closed his door, a look of cruel delight came into Sok's face, and he twisted my wrist gleefully, dragging me back down the ramps.  
>'So, Eret, *son of Eret*, welcome to your room.' he sneered, once we'd arrived at the door. He used me as a battering ram to open it- and the door was metal. Those bruises took weeks to heal.  
>He pushed me onto the floor.  
>'Goodnight, Eret, son of Eret.' he snarled, leaving me on the floor.  
>After I'd heard him walk down the ramps to his room, I got up painfully, and made my way to the bed in the corner of the room. I got in, and drew the animal pelt cover up to my chin, listening to the sounds of screaming dragons, as I went to sleep.<p>

## 16. Discovering the Fort

\*\*Just warning you now, I tend to ramble on and repeat myself a lot when writing about Valka's thoughts in this chapter... :P\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Valka's POV<strong>  
>Cloudjumper and I were preparing to go out on our first night flight. We'd been practising in the daytime, a few weeks since he'd brought me here, but now we thought we were ready to try flying at night, and Cloudjumper asked the King for permission.<br>A-alpha, he stammered, although I did not know why. The Bewilderbeast was a good King, and the Stormcutter had no reason to be afraid of him.  
><em>I<em>- we were wondering if we could perhaps...go out on a night flight?  
>The King moved his great head slightly, and Cloudjumper jumped back, and whimpered. He didn't understand that the King was inclining his head, to say yes.<br>After a few seconds, Cloudjumper understood.  
><em>Oh, thank you<em>, Alpha! We will be back soon.  
>The King made a rumbling noise, which could have been good-natured laughter.<p>

\* \* \*

><p>I couldn't help but let out a whoop of exhilaration, as we were flying across the sea, at Cloudjumper's top speed. He picked up on my emotions, as dragons can do, and roared in happiness.<br>Suddenly, he stiffened, and growled. I glanced down at his eyes, and noticed worryingly, that his pupils were slits.  
>'Cloudjumper, what is it?' I asked, laying a hand on his snout, which usually helped to soothe him.<br>Not this time, though.  
>He shook my hand off, and snarled, staring straight ahead, like a wolf that has seen a deer.<br>I decided to stop attempting to calm him down, and instead give him the respect he deserved. Perhaps he was trying to warn me of something.  
>As it happened, he was.<br>I copied him, staring straight ahead too, in the hope that if I focused my eyes enough, I could see what he could.  
>Far away, in the distance, I could see a dark shape, which looked like a building. I could also see that it was located on what looked like a beach. Cloudjumper's eyebeams (which are a bit like streetlights, only they are in dragons' eyes) helped me to see the rest.<br>Men were walking about, presumably patrolling. I prayed to

Thor that one of them did not turn around, because if they looked hard enough, they would see us.

><em>Mistress<em>, Cloudjumper whispered, \_the King is telling me to return to him\_.

>'I can't hear his call.' I pointed out.<br>\_When the King is summoning\_, \_his call is only audible to dragons\_.

>I nodded, taking in this fascinating information. I seemed to be learning new things about dragons every day.<br>Cloudjumper started to fly back to the Sanctuary, on silent wings.

><em>You must tell the King about this<em>, \_mistress\_.

>'Why must I tell him?'<br>\_Because I have a feeling these humans are bad\_, \_and it is dishonourable to speak badly of humans to another dragon\_, \_for your gods may disapprove\_.

>I had a strange feeling, that, although Cloudjumper had told me two new things about his species, he may have been lying, because the morning after I had had my nightmare, the King had told me everything I needed to know about dragons- because he felt I was 'worthy'- and he hadn't mentioned this. And the King couldn't have been lying, for he was the King, and he was a Bewilderbeast, so he knew everything about dragons- a King must know his subjects, and he must not lie to them, as it is 'disrespectful'. This was the first 'Dragon Lesson' he had told me.<br>And how could Cloudjumper have known that those humans were bad? And why had he told me that the King was calling him- almost as if he had wanted to get away as fast as possible? True, I had too- but there seemed more to it than that; like Cloudjumper knew those humans. I also felt he was lying about that I had to tell the King- almost as if he was afraid to tell the King himself- because if I didn't, it would be 'dishonourable' to our gods. He had said that he had a feeling that those humans were bad- which made me believe he knew them even more. Otherwise, what reason would he have to believe this?

>All these unanswered questions- that could only be answered tomorrow, when I went to see the King. It was so frustrating, but Cloudjumper had told me that, although the Bewilderbeast was a good king, he did not like to be disturbed at night, which I could understand. It was because of this, that I did not think that Cloudjumper was lying about this, too- and I was also too scared to go to the King at night, anyway, because, as I said before, I did not think Cloudjumper was lying, and I was scared of what the Bewilderbeast might do if I disturbed him at night. Although I knew that he was a good king, as I have once again mentioned before, as Cloudjumper was afraid to tell the Bewilderbeast what we had found today, regardless of whether he was lying or not, naturally, I was afraid too.<br>There was one thing I could do, though, which was hope that dragons could not read thoughts, human or dragon.

>Cloudjumper snorted, offended- which made me think that he could read my thoughts, after all.<br>He seemed to have forgiven me later though, when we had returned to the nest, as if he had not, he would have slept by the other side of the little cave, and not enwrapped me in his wings.

><em>Do not worry<em>, \_mistress\_, he reassured me, but it seemed that he was just as unassured by this as I was, as we both stayed awake, thinking; Cloudjumper occasionally grumbling and growling to himself, which served as my lullaby- although this particular one it did not help me get to sleep as much as \_For the Dancing and the Dreaming\_ did for Hiccup, when I used to sing it to him, before I was taken by Cloudjumper.

>Eventually, I finally managed to get to sleep thinking of my son, and Stoick, and wondering how they were coping without me.<br>I could only hope that they were doing fine. But I knew, deep down, that this

was not the case, and this was the reason that I had cried myself to sleep.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>The Monstrous Nightmare's POV<strong>

>I was awoken from my cage by an overwhelming urge. But it did not feel like the Alpha's call, or the Queen's. It felt like...food. The urge was hunger.<br>And I could smell the delicious scent from down on the beach. Mixed in with that smell was metal, but I ignored it. I was desperate to eat- so desperate that I blasted my cage door off with fire, and flew, silently down to the beach.

>Humans shouted angrily.<br>"SHOOT IT! SHOOT IT DOWN! IT'S ESCAPING!"

>"No. It's going for the food in the trap..."<br>There it was. A massive piece of meat. And there was no Queen to steal it from me, and demand more food. I bit into it, savouring the juiciness, the flavour...

><em>SNAP<em>!

>Jaws closed on my leg. Was it the Queen's? No. It couldn't be. They felt more cold, more metal, as they ripped into my scales. My dragon-blood started pouring out of the wound, like my ability to fight, to get out of the trap. I remembered when I was free, and then the Alpha changed me. It had felt like this. And, like when the Alpha had changed me, I knew that nobody could save me now...<p>

## 17. A Talk with the King

**\*\*Chapter Sixteen - A Talk with the King\*\***

**\*\*Valka's POV\*\***

>I opened my eyes, awoken by the sunlight streaming into our little cave, and remembered one thing, immediately: talking with the King.<br>'Come on, Cloudjumper.' I said cheerily.

><em>Mistress<em>, \_I will stay here\_, \_if it is all the same to you\_.

>'Well,' I said, my good mood disappearing, like the King's ice breath, as I remembered seeing the building, 'your loss. You don't have to come if you don't want to.'<br>Then I ran out of the cave, and to the grassy platform, that, below, the King was.

>I bowed to him.<br>Two, huge, blue eyes looked at me kindly.

><em>Welcome<em>, \_little human\_. \_What brings you here\_?

>'I have come, King, to tell you some bad news.'<br>His blue eyes grew misty, as if he had already known I was going to say this, but he still inquired.

><em>Oh<em>? \_Tell me more\_.

>'Well, you remember, yesterday, Cloudjumper and I went out on a night flight, and, well... we made an unexpected discovery.'<br>\_Yes\_?

>'We found a building- a fort of some kind- and...men were patrolling it... at Cloudjumper's insistence, we returned here.'<br>\_Little human\_, \_I believe that those men were dragon trappers\_, \_working for a man known as Drago Bludvist to your kind\_.

>A voice came into my head, as soon as I heard that name.<br>\_LET'S JUST SEE HOW WELL YOU DO WITHOUT ME\_, \_THEN\_!

>Stoick arriving home, his face charred and scorched with ash and flame, looking as though he had seen a ghost- the ghosts of the other



Chieftains. Telling me the story of how this man had murdered them, and he was the only survivor of the massacre.<br>My eyes blurred with tears, at the mere thought of my husband.

><em>If I am correct<em>, \_which I believe I am\_, \_we will need to take action immediately\_. \_We will need to gather my subjects\_, \_and send them out to the fort\_. \_I will come along later to launch an...\_ah\_, \_surprise attack\_.

>'Very well, King.'  
At the King's call, thousands of dragons came flying towards him, Cloudjumper, although reluctantly, included.

><em>Jumper of the Cloud<em>. The King directed this mental message to the trembling Stormcutter.

><em>Y<em>-\_yes\_, \_K\_-\_king\_?

><em>You and your rider will be the leader of our attack on the fort<em>, \_as your rider is the only human here\_, \_and as such\_, \_is able to command my subjects\_, \_like I can\_. \_But she will be the leader for now\_, \_until I launch my surprise attack later\_.

>Cloudjumper moved his head slightly, as to agree, and to allow me to climb onto his back.<br>\_When the Jumper of the Cloud rises\_, \_follow him\_. he instructed his remaining subjects.

>They were more than happy to obey him- the Scuttleclaws were jumping up and down, and squeaking excitedly, in anticipation, only to be gently rebuked by the King, and their mothers.<br>I patted Cloudjumper- the hand signal for him to rise.

>And, taking off after him, streaking into the sky, and to the fort, were a swarm of dragons, the air deafened by their noises, and also the Scuttleclaws' excited chattering.<p>

## 18. The Next Chapter? (Author's Note)

\*\*Now, the next chapter could go many different ways. I've written a few ideas, but I couldn't decide which one to choose- so I'm going to ask you guys!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>First Idea:<strong>

\*\*Valka's POV\*\*

As the outline of the fort loomed out of the misty sea, I realised that it still looked creepy, even in daylight. Maybe it was like that to prevent unwanted visitors- like us- from coming.

>Once I thought we'd got close enough- but not for anybody to see us- I made a swiping motion with my hand, to tell them to stay back.<br>"I'm just going to get the lay of the land." I told Cloudjumper. He snorted nervously, though still in agreement.

>Suddenly, I heard a terrible howling noise, which made the dragons spook out, and it took a roar from Cloudjumper to get them to settle down again.<br>\_No...\_my dragon brother... Cloudjumper gasped. He flew down to the beach, and landed.

><em>You must help him<em>, \_mistress\_.

>'W-what do you mea-'  
I answered my own question, as the source of the howling turned out to be a dragon caught in a trap.

>I walked over to it slowly, so as not to scare it.<br>The species was a Monstrous Nightmare- I knew that much, as they were probably the most prolific dragons when they raided back on Berk.

><em>Berk<em>...

>Tears blurred my eyes again.<br>No. I must not think about it. The Sanctuary was my new home now. And I had to concentrate on freeing this dragon.

>I looked into the dragon's eyes, to try to calm it down- but I regretted it.<br>\_Those eyes\_...

>Slitted pupils, <em>burning<em> with anger, and rage, and misery.

>But why? Why was it so furious- no, <em>seething<em>?

>I thought desperately for an answer to this question. The King had once told me (Dragon Lesson 5) that, although there were very few of his kind left, there were still some who were bad. Bad Kings, he had said, who abused their ability to bend other dragons to their will.<br>This dragon may have suffered under one such bad King. This would definitely explain his slitted pupils.

>My thoughts were interrupted by a sharp roar from Cloudjumper, warning me I did not have much time.<br>At last, the lock of the trap sprang open, and the Nightmare was free...

>"<em>DRAGON RIDER<em>!" came a shout from behind me.

>'Go on! Go! You're free now! Fly!' I told the Nightmare frantically.<br>But he would not go. He cowered on the sand, waiting for the owner of the voice.

>I ran over to Cloudjumper, and tried to climb onto him- but a dart pierced his skin, narrowly missing me, and he fell onto the sand.<br>'\_No\_! Wake up! \_Wake up\_!' I shouted.

>But he only groaned sleepily in reply.<br>I instinctively ran over to the only dragon left I could protect- the Sanctuary dragons had been incapacitated by darts attached to bolases.

>I placed my hand gently on the Monstrous Nightmare's snout, as men surrounded me, swords, axes, and crossbows drawn and at the ready.<br>'Aaaand we're all here.' I said, slightly sarcastically.

>'Don't hurt the Nightmare!'  
>"Why would we?" one man sneered. He was standing at the front of the crowd of men, so I guessed he was the leader. 'Drago wouldn't be pleased with us if we did that.'

>I breathed a sigh of relief inwardly. This man was not Drago- and he certainly didn't look like he was capable of burning down any buildings- with people still inside- due to his rather skinny arms.<br>'Yep, I'm not Drago.' he confirmed, as if he could read my mind. 'And you should be thanking your gods that I'm not.' he added onimiously.

>'Erm... why?'<br>'Oh, you're a curious little dragon rider, aren't you. But in case you've forgotten, it's \_us\_ who's supposed to be asking \_you\_ the questions, not the other way around.'

>He walked towards me slightly, trying to intimidate me- but I could hardly be intimidated by a man who was probably no older than me, with skinny arms. This was not the case for the Nightmare, however. He continued to cower in fear as the man got closer.<br>'Let me just ask you one question, before you get on with your so-called "interrogation"...what's your name?'

>'The less you know, the better. I once had those exact words said to me by Drago, when he first recruited me. And I know them to be true now.'  
>'Maybe I don't need to know your name. But you all need to know \_this\_.' I stood up. The Monstrous Nightmare responded to this, seeming to have found hope again, and did the same.

>The man looked nervous, but he still stood his ground.<br>'What are you going to do-'

>'Just let me show you.'  
>And so, I extended my palm out to the Monstrous Nightmare, the same way my son had done fifteen years

later, and said the exact same words he had said, upon discovering what I had.

>History repeats itself.<br>'Everything we know about them...is wrong. They're not what we think they are...'

>'Really?! Try telling that to Drago. He lost his arm to the beasts.'  
'If you would just let me show you...' I repeated.

>'No. Let *ME* show YOU.' the man said, whacking my hand away from the dragon's snout, hitting the poor reptile, and screaming at it.

>The Nightmare's once-docile eyes turned to slits at this cruel treatment, and he went not after me, but after the man.<br>He screamed in terror, which was understandable.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Second Idea:<strong>

**\*\*Eret's POV\*\***

>I opened my eyes, and realised with a sick feeling in my stomach that sunlight was already streaming through the window. I should have got up before dawn, and now I was going to have to pay for not doing so...I may as well make it fast.<br>I opened the door of the room, and walked outside, onto the ramps. Ziist came running up to me, breathless.

>'Oh, Eret. Thank gods you're up. We need you.'  
'Why?'

>He took a spyglass out of his pocket, and handed it to me. I looked into it, and saw thousands of dragons flying towards the fort.<br>My stomach dropped even further.

>'T-those don't look like Drago's dragons. How long before they get here?'  
'I'm not sure, but not long enough for us to sail to Drago and tell him- but probably long enough to send airmail.'

>I nodded.<br>He whistled, and a Terrible Terror flew out of the sky, and landed on his arm, similar to a falcon.

>He showed me what he had written on a letter, which he produced from his pocket.<br>Drago,

>*There's what appears to be another dragon army flying towards the fort*, intending to attack us. We will shoot them down, of course, and bring them to you, so we should have surpassed our dragon quota.

>*From Ziist*.

>He then put it into the Terror's claws.<br>'Fly back to your master.' he instructed, and raised his arm. The little dragon flew off as soon as his arm reached its highest point.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>The Terrible Terror's POV<strong>

>As I am flying, suddenly I hear a noise. One I know well. It is my Alpha's call...but it is from a different Alpha.<br>No! Why am I even calling it an Alpha?! It is telling me to call it that. But I will not. Doesn't it know that I will always serve my rightful Alpha, which is not it. Or maybe it is.

>No. NO. I must resist. But it is too late.<br>I look around for my new Alpha, but I do not see it.

>I smell underneath the sea, and catch his scent. Perhaps he is hiding.<br>I turn around, and see those horrible men. I squeak in outrage, and fly towards them.

>'FIRE!'  
>A sharp thing sticks into me. I look back at where I have been shot, and see a red thing, with a sharp point embedded into my

green scales. That is the last thing I remember.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Eret's POV<strong>

>'Right, now that's taken care of...' Ziist kicked the Terror, and smiled nastily up at the dragons flying towards us.<br>'You'll all be joining it soon.' he snarled.

>One of the dragons, at the front, cut off from the group, and flew down to the beach where the Monstrous Nightmare was caught in the trap. It looked like a Stormcutter, and... a figure climbed off it.<br>I drew my sword, and tried to walk over to them, but Ziist blocked my path with his arm.

>'Wait.' he whispered. 'When they're distracted, I'll give the signal for the dart-bolases.'  
>The figure was busy undoing the trap, so I guessed they were distracted now.

>Ziist raised his other arm, and prepared to drop it- this was the signal.<br>As fast and as silent as a Night Fury, the dart-bolases were fired. The dragons hardly knew what had hit them. One second they were flying, the next, they were plummeting down, trapped in the bolases. Those who hadn't been incapacitated were, once they hit the ground.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Valka's POV<strong>

>I heard the dragons crashing onto the sand, and my stomach dropped. I had to save them...but I also had to free this Monstrous Nightmare.<br>I looked into the dragon's eyes, to try to calm it down- but I regretted it.

><em>Those eyes<em>...

>Slitted pupils, <em>burning<em> with anger, and rage, and misery.

>But why? Why was it so furious- no, <em>seething<em>?

>I thought desperately for an answer to this question. The King had once told me (Dragon Lesson 5) that, although there were very few of his kind left, there were still some who were bad. Bad Kings, he had said, who abused their ability to bend other dragons to their will.<br>This dragon may have suffered under one such bad King. This would definitely explain his slitted pupils.

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>"<em>DRAGON RIDER<em>!" came a shout from behind me.

>'Go on! Go! You're free now! Fly!' I told the Nightmare frantically.<br>But he would not go. He cowered on the sand, waiting for the owner of the voice.

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>But he only groaned sleepily in reply.<br>I instinctively ran over to the only dragon left I could protect- the Sanctuary dragons had been incapacitated by darts attached to bolases.

>I placed my hand gently on the Monstrous Nightmare's snout, as men surrounded me, swords, axes, and crossbows drawn and at the ready.<br>'Aaaand we're all here.' I said, slightly sarcastically.

>'Don't hurt the Nightmare!'  
>"Why would we?" one man sneered. He was standing at the front of the crowd of men, so I guessed he was the leader. 'Drago wouldn't be pleased with us if we did that.'

>I breathed a sigh of relief inwardly. This man was not Drago- and he certainly didn't look like he was capable of burning down any buildings- with people still inside- due to his rather skinny arms.<br>'Yep, I'm not Drago.' he confirmed, as if he could read my mind. 'And you should be thanking your gods that I'm not.' he added onimiously.

>'Erm... why?<br>'Oh, you're a curious little dragon rider, aren't you. But in case you've forgotten, it's us who's supposed to be asking you the questions, not the other way around.'

>He walked towards me slightly, trying to intimidate me- but I could hardly be intimidated by a man who was probably no older than me, with skinny arms. This was not the case for the Nightmare, however. He continued to cower in fear as the man got closer.<br>'Let me just ask you one question, before you get on with your so-called "interrogation"...what's your name?'

>'The less you know, the better. I once had those exact words said to me by Drago, when he first recruited me. And I know them to be true now.'<br>'Maybe I don't need to know your name. But you all need to know this.' I stood up. The Monstrous Nightmare responded to this, seeming to have found hope again, and did the same.

>The man looked nervous, but he still stood his ground.<br>'What are you going to do-'

>'Just let me show you.'<br>And so, I extended my palm out to the Monstrous Nightmare, the same way my son had done fifteen years later, and said the exact same words he had said, upon discovering what I had.

>History repeats itself.<br>'Everything we know about them...is wrong. They're not what we think they are...'

>'Really?! Try telling that to Drago. He lost his arm to the beasts.'<br>'If you would just let me show you...' I repeated.

>'No. Let *ME* show YOU.' the man said, whacking my hand away from the dragon's snout, hitting the poor reptile, and screaming at it.

>The Nightmare's once-docile eyes turned to slits at this cruel treatment, and he went not after me, but after the man.<br>He screamed in terror, which was understandable.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Third Idea:<strong>

**\*\*Ziist's POV\*\***

>"Eret!" I yell, and run after him.<br>"Sir, no!"

>"You'll get yourself killed!" the other trappers shout. I ignore them.<br>'RUN!' I scream to Eret.

>'But, sir-'  
>'RUN! I'll take care of the Nightmare!'

>The dragon notices us speaking, and runs straight for me. I notice with relief that Eret has got out of the way. The Nightmare notices this too, and a clawed paw swats me aside, in its frenzy to get to him.<br>But I don't remember any more.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Cloudjumper's POV<strong>

>A piercing scream entered my head, waking me up. I looked around, and I saw the Monstrous Nightmare.<br>So, you've woken up, he snarled.

><em>Apparently<em>, you are not as stupid as you seem, I replied.

>With a roar of rage, he walked towards me, but before he reached me, I got up, and we circled each other.<br>The people crowding around us gasped. My mistress was among them.  
><em>You don't have to do this<em>, \_Nightmare\_.  
><em>Alpha's orders<em>.  
>I could not tell if he was lying or not, but if I listened hard, into his thoughts, I could hear a voice.<br>\_\*\*BRING THE TRAITOR TO ME\*\*\_.  
><em>A<em>-\_alpha\_, \_he is\_ \_too strong\_-willed...  
  
><em><strong>WE WILL SEE ABOUT THAT<strong>\_.  
>The voice was not in the Nightmare's thoughts, but in mine, now.<br>\_\*\*GIVE UP\*\*\_. \_\*\*I AM YOUR ALPHA NOW\*\*\_.  
><em>No<em>. \_Not again\_â€|\_Listen to me\_, \_Nightmare\_, \_please\_, \_you can be free from the Queen\_, \_from the Alpha\_, \_from any of those that try to control you\_, \_if you just join us\_.  
><em>That is what the Alpha said to me<em>. \_And I\_ am \_free\_.  
  
><em>You are not<em>. \_He is just making you believe that\_. \_You are in a trance\_. \_Wake up\_! \_WAKE UP\_!  
>For a second, the Nightmare's eyes turned docile, but even then, they were miserable. And then his eyes turned to slits again.<br>\_I can see you\_, \_Nightmare\_. \_I can see who you are inside\_. \_You are miserable\_. \_Your Alpha is not a good King\_. \_He is using you\_. \_But my King\_, \_however\_, is \_good\_.  
><em><strong>YOU HAVE A KING<strong>, \_\*\*STORMCUTTER\*\*\_?!  
  
><em>Yes<em>. \_And you can meet him\_, \_if you wish\_.  
  
><em><strong>VERY WELL<strong>\_. \_\*\*I WILL CRUSH YOUR PATHETIC\*\*\_ " \_\*\*KING\*\*\_", \_\*\*GORE HIM WITH MY TUSKS\*\*\_!  
><em>Mistress<em>, \_can you call the Alpha\_  
>'Yes, Cloudjumper.'  
>'You might want to run.'  
>Except for one.<br>A young man, sitting next to the body of another, which had blood running down its face.  
>He was too busy trying to find any signs of life in his companion, to notice what was going on.<br>\_\*\*IF I HAD A HEART\*\*\_, \_\*\*I MIGHT FIND THIS TOUCHING\*\*\_. \_\*\*BUT MY MASTER BROKE MINE LONG AGO\*\*\_.  
  
>You... I hissed at the voice. You <em>killed him<em>.  
>I <em><strong>DID NOT KILL HIM<strong>. HE \_\*\*DID\*\*\_.  
>By 'him', I knew that the voice was referring to the Monstrous Nightmare.<br>I snarled at him, and prepared to fight again.  
>This time, a different voice entered my head- a calm, kinder one- my Alpha's voice.<br>\_\*\*No\*\*\_, \_\*\*Jumper of the Cloud\*\*\_. \_\*\*Do not murder him out of anger\*\*\_. \_\*\*Then you would be no better than him\*\*\_.  
>The sound of his voice calmed me, enough to obey him.<br>\_Yes\_, \_Alpha\_.  
>Then the voice entered my head again.<br>\_\*\*THERE IS\*\*\_...\_\*\*ANOTHER ONE\*\*\_?! it roared.  
><em>Yes<em>. \_There is\_. \_And he is a better King than you will ever be\_.  
>The voice roared in fury.<br>\_\*\*NIGHTMARE\*\*\_, \_\*\*TO ME\*\*\_!  
>The dragon prepared to take to the sky, and obey the voice. An urge tugged inside me to do the same.<br>\_Follow\_. \_Follow\_.  
  
><em>No<em>, the Alpha said firmly, \_you will not\_. \_Now\_, \_let us get on with the matter at hand\_...

>The mighty beast turned his head towards the fort, and inhaled.<p>

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Eret's POV<strong>

>'No...' I whimpered, doing everything I could to shield Ziist.  
'<em>No<em>...'

>I had one last look at him, and gently removed his metal Stormcutter disc. At least I'd have something to remember him by.<br>Then the ice-spitter blasted him out of the world, and my world faded into freezing, cold, white.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Valka's POV<strong>

>'King,' I whispered, 'look.'  
>The Bewilderbeast did so, and made his equivalent of a gasp.

>A young man was lying on the ground, another man next to him. The first one was clearly dead, but the other was not.<br>'I-it's okay,' I gasped, although it was not. 'You just c-couldn't see him, before you aimed...'

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Send me a PM, or review to let me know which should be the next chapter! :D<strong>

\*\*(Reading Valka's POV of the third idea has inspired me...)\*\*

## 19. Dragon Rider

\*\*Here's the next chapter, with the second idea, and the third one (with a bit added on) combined!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Chapter Seventeen - Dragon Rider<strong>

\*\*Eret's POV\*\*

>I opened my eyes, and realised with a sick feeling in my stomach that sunlight was already streaming through the window. I should have got up before dawn, and now I was going to have to pay for not doing so...I may as well make it fast.<br>I opened the door of the room, and walked outside, onto the ramps. Ziist came running up to me, breathless.

>'Oh, Eret. Thank gods you're up. We need you.'  
>'Why?'

>He took a spyglass out of his pocket, and handed it to me. I looked into it, and saw thousands of dragons flying towards the fort.<br>My stomach dropped even further.

>'T-those don't look like Drago's dragons. How long before they get here?'  
>'I'm not sure, but not long enough for us to sail to Drago and tell him- but probably long enough to send airmail.'

>I nodded.<br>He whistled, and a Terrible Terror flew out of the sky, and landed on his arm, similar to a falcon.

>He showed me what he had written on a letter, which he produced from his pocket.<br>\_Drago\_,

><em>There's what appears to be another dragon army flying towards the fort<em>\_, \_intending to attack us\_. \_We will shoot them down\_,

\_of course\_, \_and bring them to you\_, \_so we should have surpassed our dragon quota\_.

><em>From Ziist<em>.

>He then put it into the Terror's claws.<br>'Fly back to your master.' he instructed, and raised his arm. The little dragon flew off as soon as his arm reached its highest point.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>The Terrible Terror's POV<strong>

>As I am flying, suddenly I hear a noise. One I know well. It is my Alpha's call...but it is from a different Alpha.<br>No! Why am I even calling it an Alpha?! It is telling me to call it that. But I will not. Doesn't it know that I will always serve my rightful Alpha, which is not it. Or maybe it is.

>No. NO. I must resist. But it is too late.<br>I look around for my new Alpha, but I do not see it.

>I smell underneath the sea, and catch his scent. Perhaps he is hiding.<br>I turn around, and see those horrible men. I squeak in outrage, and fly towards them.

>"FIRE!"<br>A sharp thing sticks into me. I look back at where I have been shot, and see a red thing, with a sharp point embedded into my green scales. That is the last thing I remember.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Eret's POV<strong>

>'Right, now that's taken care of...' Ziist kicked the Terror, and smiled nastily up at the dragons flying towards us.<br>'You'll all be joining it soon.' he snarled.

>One of the dragons, at the front, cut off from the group, and flew down to the beach where the Monstrous Nightmare was caught in the trap. It looked like a Stormcutter, and... a figure climbed off it.<br>I drew my sword, and tried to walk over to them, but Ziist blocked my path with his arm.

>'Wait.' he whispered. 'When they're distracted, I'll give the signal for the dart-bolases.'  
>The figure was busy undoing the trap, so I guessed they were distracted now.

>Ziist raised his other arm, and prepared to drop it- this was the signal.<br>As fast and as silent as a Night Fury, the dart-bolases were fired. The dragons hardly knew what had hit them. One second they were flying, the next, they were plummeting down, trapped in the bolases. Those who hadn't been incapacitated were, once they hit the ground.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Valka's POV<strong>

>I heard the dragons crashing onto the sand, and my stomach dropped. I had to save them...but I also had to free this Monstrous Nightmare.<br>I looked into the dragon's eyes, to try to calm it down- but I regretted it.

><em>Those eyes<em>...

>Slitted pupils, <em>burning<em> with anger, and rage, and misery.

>But why? Why was it so furious- no, <em>seething<em>?

>I thought desperately for an answer to this question. The King had once told me (Dragon Lesson 5) that, although there were very few of his kind left, there were still some who were bad. Bad Kings, he had said, who abused their ability to bend other dragons to their



will.<br>This dragon may have suffered under one such bad King. This would definitely explain his slitted pupils.  
>My thoughts were interrupted by a sharp roar from Cloudjumper, warning me I did not have much time.<br>At last, the lock of the trap sprang open, and the Nightmare was free...  
>"<em>DRAGON RIDER<em>!" came a shout from behind me.  
>'Go on! Go! You're free now! Fly!' I told the Nightmare frantically.<br>But he would not go. He cowered on the sand, waiting for the owner of the voice.  
>I ran over to Cloudjumper, and tried to climb onto him- but a dart pierced his skin, narrowly missing me, and he fell onto the sand.<br>'\_No\_! Wake up! \_Wake up\_!' I shouted.  
>But he only groaned sleepily in reply.<br>I instinctively ran over to the only dragon left I could protect- the Sanctuary dragons had been incapacitated by darts attached to bolases.  
>I placed my hand gently on the Monstrous Nightmare's snout, as men surrounded me, swords, axes, and crossbows drawn and at the ready.<br>'Aaaand we're all here.' I said, slightly sarcastically.

>'Don't hurt the Nightmare!'  
>"Why would we?" one man sneered. He was standing at the front of the crowd of men, so I guessed he was the leader. 'Drago wouldn't be pleased with us if we did that.'  
>I breathed a sigh of relief inwardly. This man was not Drago- and he certainly didn't look like he was capable of burning down any buildings- with people still inside- due to his rather skinny arms.<br>'Yep, I'm not Drago.' he confirmed, as if he could read my mind. 'And you should be thanking your gods that I'm not.' he added onimiously.  
>'Erm... why?'<br>'Oh, you're a curious little dragon rider, aren't you. But in case you've forgotten, it's us who's supposed to be asking you the questions, not the other way around.'  
>He walked towards me slightly, trying to intimidate me- but I could hardly be intimidated by a man who was probably no older than me, with skinny arms. This was not the case for the Nightmare, however. He continued to cower in fear as the man got closer.<br>'Let me just ask you one question, before you get on with your so-called "interrogation"...what's your name?'  
>'The less you know, the better. I once had those exact words said to me by Drago, when he first recruited me. And I know them to be true now.'  
>'Maybe I don't need to know your name. But you all need to know this.' I stood up. The Monstrous Nightmare responded to this, seeming to have found hope again, and did the same.  
>The man looked nervous, but he still stood his ground.<br>'What are you going to do-'  
>'Just let me show you.'  
>And so, I extended my palm out to the Monstrous Nightmare, the same way my son had done fifteen years later, and said the exact same words he had said, upon discovering what I had.  
>History repeats itself.<br>'Everything we know about them...is wrong. They're not what we think they are...'  
>'Really?! Try telling that to Drago. He lost his arm to the beasts.'  
>'If you would just let me show you...' I repeated.

>'No. Let <em>ME<em> show YOU.' the man said, whacking my hand away from the dragon's snout, hitting the poor reptile, and screaming at it.  
>The Nightmare's once-docile eyes turned to slits at this cruel treatment, and he went not after me, but after the man.<br>He screamed in terror, which was understandable.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Ziist's POV<strong>  
>"Eret!" I yell, and run after him.<br>"Sir, no!"  
>"You'll get yourself killed!" the other trappers shout. I ignore them.<br>'RUN!' I scream to Eret.  
>'But, sir-'<br>'RUN! I'll take care of the Nightmare!'  
>The dragon notices us speaking, and runs straight for me. I notice with relief that Eret has got out of the way. The Nightmare notices this too, and a clawed paw swats me aside, in its frenzy to get to him.<br>But I don't remember any more.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Cloudjumper's POV<strong>  
>A piercing scream entered my head, waking me up. I looked around, and I saw the Monstrous Nightmare.<br>\_So\_, \_you've woken up\_, he snarled.  
><em>Apparently<em>, \_you are not as stupid as you seem\_, I replied.  
  
>With a roar of rage, he walked towards me, but before he reached me, I got up, and we circled each other.<br>The people crowding around us gasped. My mistress was among them.  
><em>You don't have to do this<em>, \_Nightmare\_.  
><em>Alpha's orders<em>.  
>I could not tell if he was lying or not, but if I listened hard, into his thoughts, I could hear a voice.<br>\*\_BRING THE TRAITOR TO ME\_\*.  
><em>A<em>-\_alpha\_, \_he is\_ \_too strong\_-willed...  
  
><strong><em>WE WILL SEE ABOUT THAT<em>\*.  
>The voice was not in the Nightmare's thoughts, but in mine, now.<br>\*\_GIVE UP\_\*.\_\*\_I AM YOUR ALPHA NOW\_\*.  
><em>No<em>.\_Not again\_â€|\_Listen to me\_, \_Nightmare\_, \_please\_, \_you can be free from the Queen\_, \_from the Alpha\_, \_from any of those that try to control you\_, \_if you just join us\_.  
><em>That is what the Alpha said to me<em>.\_And I\_ am \_free\_.  
  
><em>You are not<em>.\_He is just making you believe that\_. \_You are in a trance\_. \_Wake up\_! \_WAKE UP\_!  
>For a second, the Nightmare's eyes turned docile, but even then, they were miserable. And then his eyes turned to slits again.<br>\_I can see you\_, \_Nightmare\_. \_I can see who you are inside\_. \_You are miserable\_. \_Your Alpha is not a good King\_. \_He is using you\_. \_But\_ my \_King\_, \_however\_, is \_good\_.  
><strong><em>YOU HAVE A KING<em>\*, \*\_STORMCUTTER\_\*?!  
  
><em>Yes<em>.\_And you can meet him\_, \_if you wish\_.

><strong><em>VERY WELL<em>\*. \*\_I WILL CRUSH YOUR PATHETIC\_\*  
"\*\_KING\_\*", \*\_GORE HIM WITH MY TUSKS\_\*!  
><em>Mistress<em>, \_can you call the Alpha\_?  
>'Yes, Cloudjumper.'  
>'You might want to run.'  
>Except for one.<br>A young man, sitting next to the body of another, which had blood running down its face.  
>He was too busy trying to find any signs of life in his companion, to notice what was going on.<br>\*\_IF I HAD A HEART\_\*, \*\_I MIGHT FIND THIS TOUCHING\_\*. \*\_BUT MY MASTER BROKE MINE LONG AGO\_\*.

>You... I hissed at the voice. You *killed him*.  
>I ***DID NOT KILL HIM***\*\*. HE ***\_DID\_***.  
>By 'him', I knew that the voice was referring to the Monstrous Nightmare.<br>I snarled at him, and prepared to fight again.  
>This time, a different voice entered my head- a calm, kinder one- my Alpha's voice.<br>***\_No\_***, ***\_Jumper of the Cloud\_***. ***\_Do not murder him out of anger\_***. ***\_Then you would be no better than him\_***.  
>The sound of his voice calmed me, enough to obey him.<br>***\_Yes\_***, ***\_Alpha\_***.  
>Then the voice entered my head again.<br>***\_THERE IS\_***...***\_ANOTHER ONE\_***?! it roared.  
>*Yes*. ***\_There is\_***. ***\_And he is a better King than you will ever be\_***.  
>The voice roared in fury.<br>***\_NIGHTMARE\_***, ***\_TO ME\_***!  
>The dragon prepared to take to the sky, and obey the voice. An urge tugged inside me to do the same.<br>***\_Follow\_***. ***\_Follow\_***.  
  
>*No*, the Alpha said firmly, ***\_you will not\_***. ***\_Now\_***, ***\_let us get on with the matter at hand\_***...  
>The mighty beast turned his head towards the fort, and inhaled.<p>

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Eret's POV<strong>  
>'No...' I whimpered, doing everything I could to shield Ziist.  
'*No*.'  
>I had one last look at him, and gently removed his metal Stormcutter disc. At least I'd have something to remember him by.<br>Then the ice-spitter blasted him out of the world, and my world faded into freezing, cold, white.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Valka's POV<strong>  
>'King,' I whispered, 'look.'  
>The Bewilderbeast did so, and made his equivalent of a gasp.  
>A young man was lying on the ground, another man next to him. The first one was clearly dead, but the other was not.<br>'I-it's okay,' I gasped, although it was not. 'You just c-couldn't see him, before you aimed...'  
>Why did I have to always be so forgiving?! The King had just killed someone, regardless if Bewilderbeasts have poor eyesight and hearing!<br>'No, it's not okay!' I yelled. 'I ***\_HATE\_*** you! You're no better than...***\_them\_***!'  
>Suddenly, I heard something walking up to me. Instinctively, I panicked- but the footsteps sounded like dragons' claws, so I knew it was Cloudjumper. His presence calmed me.<br>***\_I am sorry\_***, ***\_Mistress\_***. ***\_It was my fault\_***. ***\_I asked you to call the Alpha\_***. ***\_Anyway\_***, ***\_the least we can do is give this man's companion a proper burial\_***.  
>He sniffed the air suddenly, and his pupils turned to slits.<br>***\_And we'd better do it quickly\_***, ***\_for I smell\_***...***\_bad dragons\_***...***\_and ships\_***...  
>The King inhaled again, and covered the dead man's body with a thick layer of ice. Thankfully, his eyes were closed.<br>'It'll be just like Hel in there for him...where he belongs.' I snarled. Although he had died, he was still a dragon trapper.  
>*<strong>Little human<strong>*, ***\_\*\*do not judge him too harshly\*\*\_***. ***\_\*\*He\_*** had ***\_\*\*to trap dragons\*\*\_***...***\_\*\*he was following***

his boss's orders\*\*\_. \_\*\*If he did not\*\*\_, \_\*\*he would have had a far earlier death\*\*\_. \_\*\*Even if I had not killed him\*\*\_, \_\*\*we would have still taken the dragons back to the Sanctuary\*\*\_, \_\*\*and his boss would have killed him\*\*\_, \_\*\*as a punishment for his failure\*\*\_. \_\*\*Think of it like that\*\*\_.  
>'Great boss.' I muttered.<br>I glanced down at the other man. After looking closer, I realised it was the man with the skinny arms- the leader.  
>'What about him?'<br>\_\*\*He will have a lot of explaining to do to his boss\*\*\_, \_\*\*for the destroyed fort\*\*\_, \_\*\*his dead companion\*\*\_, \_\*\*and his lack of dragons\*\*\_.  
><em>Well said<em>, \_King\_. \_But we will be the ones doing the explaining\_, \_if we do not get out of here\_! \_The smell is getting stronger\_!  
><em><strong>You are right<strong>\_, \_\*\*Jumper of the Cloud\*\*\_. \_\*\*We should go\*\*\_.  
>At the King's call, the dragons of the Sanctuary woke up, and started to fly towards him. I climbed onto Cloudjumper quickly, as he started to fly too, back to the Sanctuary.<p>

## 20. A Lot of Explaining

\*\*Been four days since I last updated, because of this chapter...I was ready to post it, but then I just kept thinking of another idea... Thankfully, I didn't need to ask you guys for help again. So, here's Chapter Eighteen, finally!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Chapter Eighteen - A Lot of Explaining <strong>

\*\*Eret's POV\*\*

>I woke up, shivering. I was so cold... Looking down at my arms, legs, and body gave me the answer- they were covered in what looked like ice.<br>But why?

>Suddenly, I remembered. <em>The ice-spitter<em>...  
\_Ziist\_...\_dead\_...

><em>No <em>. It couldn't be true.

>But it was. His body was encased in ice.<br>I looked around the beach, hoping to find the shapes of sleeping dragons.

>They weren't there.<br>I rubbed my eyes, hoping that this was yet another thing that couldn't be true.

>But, like with Ziist's death, it was.<br>There were absolutely no dragons on the beach.

>And I was going to have to pay for that...<br>Well, Drago couldn't punish me, if he couldn't find me, I decided, and got up, and ran.

>The familiar sound of chains clanking, shouting, and dragons screaming entered my ears.<br>How did he know I was here?

>Of course. The dragons.<br>I ran into a cave inside the rocks. Just in time, too, because I heard footsteps.

>And the feet of which had made those steps, had stepped onto many dragons' snouts. While doing this, the owner of those feet had said, 'You belong to me now.'  
>The footsteps stopped. I dared to peek out of the cave.

>Drago, and one of his soldiers were standing next to Ziist's body.<br>'...Sir, why can't we just leave the trapper here?'

>Drago took a while before answering. The soldier gulped- when he didn't answer, it meant that he was very, very, angry with

you.<br>'\_Do you know how important he is to me\_?'

>'Um, yes.'  
'\_Do you know that he is one of the best\_, \_if not\_ the \_best\_, \_trappers I have\_?'

>'Yes.'  
'\_Why did you question me\_, \_then\_?'

>'I'm sorry, sir, I-'  
'\_Do you know what happens to people who question me\_?'

>'Yes, sir.'  
The nearby dragons' pupils were still docile. That was strange. Why weren't they slavering and snarling?

>'Go on,' Drago said quietly. 'Go over to them. They won't hurt you.'  
The soldier obligingly did as he was ordered, although he was shaking. Nervously, he put his foot lightly on a dragon's snout. The dragon didn't panic- he was used to this.

>A smile came over the soldier's face.<br>'I'm controlling it, sir! I- I'm a dragon master too!' He was immediately silent after he'd realised what he'd said.

>What he didn't notice, was the cruel smile of evil intent that was on his boss's face. But I did.<br>Drago walked over to the nearby sea, and waited. Eventually, the waves broke, and his Bewilderbeast came out.

>The soldier definitely noticed <em>this</em>. He stood, frozen in fear, as Drago pointed his staff to the huge dragon, and then to the smaller ones, the smile still on his face.

>The dragons' pupils immediately snapped to slits. The soldier just managed to get his foot off the dragon's snout before its jaws snapped onto the limb.<br>They started to move towards him slowly, growling menacingly. The soldier backed away, pleading frantically.

>'N-nice dragons...n-nice dragons...please don't kill me...please...y-you wouldn't hurt me, would you...?'<br>'They will...' Drago snarled, '...if it is the command of the Alpha. And no dragon can resist its command.'

>'Oh, no. Drago, please. You wouldn't feed your best soldier to the dragons, would you?'<br>'The trapper is the best, and he is important to me. But you are not. And how would you be an example to those who question me, human...'

>'...And dragon?' he smiled in pure hatred at the beasts, who whimpered, understandably.<br>The soldier continued pleading for his life.

>'<em>SILENCE!</em>' Drago screamed. The soldier stopped gabbling immediately. That was the usual effect.

>'This is for questioning me, and daring to think that you are a dragon master too. There is only one- and that is me- I alone, control them all. Goodbye.'  
'\_Destroy him\_.' he whispered to the dragons.

>The dragons immediately ran after the soldier, saliva hanging from their mouths. He didn't realise, that by running, he was triggering the dragons' predatory instincts- to chase, to hunt, to tear apart- which had been built into them before they had been changed by the Alpha's control- and the Alpha's control only magnified these instincts.<br>You wouldn't want me to describe what happened to the soldier, believe me.

>Drago watched the dragons tear apart the soldier, and smiled- if you could even call it a smile- proudly at his killing machines.<br>'Apology accepted.' he sneered to the pile of bones. He raised his head to the sky, as if he was going to speak to the gods- which he was.

>'Tell him I said that, would you?'<br>'Yep,' I muttered, from the cave. 'He's definitely gone crazy- trying to speak to the gods.'

>But Drago had better hearing than I thought.<br>'\_WHAT?!' he

screamed, looking around to see where my voice was coming from.

'\_WHERE ARE YOU?!'

>'I'm right here!' I called out, showing my face.<br>He made a noise, something between a growl, and a scream, strangled in fury.

>It echoed across the beach, sounding like a dragon call.<br>As it happened, it was a dragon call- a Monstrous Nightmare's.

>So, he had accidentally screamed a Nightmare call...<br>The only Nightmare in the group of Drago's dragons took to the sky.

>'<em>NO<em>! \_NO\_! \_NO\_!' he roared. '\_CONTROL IT! \_MAKE IT COME BACK\_!' he screamed at his Bewilderbeast, which was the closest thing that he could yell at.

>Of course, the next thing he would yell at would probably be me. I prepared for my eardrums to explode.<br>Stupidly, I guaranteed the explosion of my eardrums (and, probably, also my death), by interjecting helpfully,

>'You're going to hurt your throat, or give yourself a headache if you carry on screaming like that.'  
>He stopped in the middle of roaring, in the absolute height of his fury, '\_GET AFTER IT\_!' to his dragons, with terrifying abruptness.

>'<em>Were you trying to tell me what to do<em>, \_boy\_?' he snarled, finally seeing me, and picking me up by my shirt.

>'Um, no, sir...'  
>He growled again, and put the claws of his dragon hand to my throat. I looked up into his scarred face- which was all I could do, because he'd grabbed me by the neck, and forced me to- and saw his eyes, burning with fury.

>I had a terrible feeling that he really was going to rip my throat out- but then, the fury in his eyes faded. Drago had controlled his anger.<br>'I will deal with you later.' he growled, dropping me onto the sand. 'You have a dragon to find for me. And if you fail this...' he trailed off threateningly, putting emphasis on 'fail', as if it was the worst thing I could do.

>Which, knowing- or not knowing, which was probably worse- what Drago would do to me if I did indeed fail, was more than correct.<br>And he'd already come close to killing me, just a few seconds ago, although he'd controlled his anger. But I didn't think he would be so merciful again, especially if I failed.

>'What's my reward?' I asked.<br>Drago seemed surprised at my daring to ask for a reward.

>'Your life.' he snarled. 'You're lucky you still have it.'  
>Not wanting to anger him further, I climbed onto one of the waiting dragons, a warning glare from Drago forcing me to do so. The beasts were eager to hunt the Nightmare, to tear it from the sky, in the bloodthirsty frenzy of the Alpha's control, so they took to the sky, instinctively knowing what their master wanted them to do, before he even screamed the command at them.

## 21. How to Discover an Island

\*\*I am such an idiot! :( I posted this on Berk's Grapevine last night, but I forgot to post it here... :( But, anyway... finally updating again after four days! Sorry I haven't done it sooner, but I had school on Thursday, and Friday. I guess I could have done it yesterday, but... \*trails off\* Anyway, here you go!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Chapter Nineteen - How to Discover an Island<strong>

**\*\*Eret's POV**

><strong>The group of dragons I was flying with picked up speed, as they saw the Monstrous Nightmare, and the dragon that I was riding on wanted to as well, but it couldn't, because I was holding onto it tightly. So, it tried to buck me off instead- unsuccessfully.  
>'If you don't stop, I'll tell your master about this.' I threatened.<br>Instantly, the dragon stopped. It looked up at me apologetically, and through its slitted pupils, though burning with the anger and misery of the Alpha's control, I could still see one emotion- which was what kept it obedient to Drago.  
>Fear.<br>It whimpered, and I met its terrified gaze sternly.  
>Then it looked back and saw its fellow dragons, and continued the chase as much as it could, with me still holding onto its neck.<br>Eventually, once we'd passed the mist, I saw a small island, the sounds of bleating sheep echoing in the night air.  
>Wait, none of the islands around here had sheep. Where was I?<br>In my mind's eye, I pictured the huge map that Drago had of the known world. Every time he recruited some new soldiers, he added their island onto the map. He'd told me that he had discovered most of the world by doing this, and, of course, his conquests.  
>The location of one of his most important (if not <em>the<em> most important) conquests he'd ever done, was labelled 'The Bewilderbeast's Nesting Site'. He'd proceeded to tell me how he'd found his Bewilderbeast there as an egg, in fake sympathy for the miserable dragon.  
>There was a compass in the corner of the map, and these lands were east. To the north, was labelled 'The Viking Lands', which included the burnt ruins of the Chieftains' Meeting building, which Drago had scribbled out.<br>There was also an island, right at the bottom of the north parts, labelled 'The Isle of Berk'.  
>It seemed to match the picture well enough.<br>So, this was Berk. But how had we flown this far north?  
>This thought was interrupted by something flying past me, very fast, but despite this, I managed to see a shadowy figure on the winged creature.<br>A dragon rider...?

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Hiccup's POV<strong>

>Suddenly, Toothless slowed down, and started looking around, growling uncertainly.<br>'Whoa, bud, what is it?' I asked him.  
>As if in answer, a dragon came out of the mist- and it had a rider. The dragon was a Nadder, so I immediately thought it was Astrid. Well, only one way to find out.<br>I got Toothless to fly above the dragon, and he grabbed the rider in his claws.  
>'PUT ME DOWN!' they screamed.<br>'Not until you tell us who you are.' Astrid said, and I saw her flying beside us on Stormfly.  
  
>'I'M NOT TELLING YOU!'  
>She shrugged her shoulders innocently.  
  
>'Well, if you won't tell us...Chief Stoick will get it out of you.'  
>The rider stopped screaming.  
>'Wait- <em>Chief<em> Stoick? You're Vikings, right?'  
>'You're not telling us who you are, so why should we tell you who we are?'<br>'Because- because- these dragons will tear you apart if you don't.' The rider took one arm off Toothless's leg, and gestured to the dragons that were following behind us, anger in their eyes.  
  
>'Oh, please,' Tuff sneered. 'We're dragon masters.'  
>Astrid glared

at Tuff.

>'Haven't you learnt anything about telling people our dragon secrets, since Heather?'<br>'But she turned out good in the end.'

>'Yes, but before that, she was working for the Outcasts. And I have a feeling this guy might be too.'<br>'You!' she snapped at the rider. 'Know anybody called Alvin the Treacherous? From the Outcast tribe, tall, brown beard, scar on one cheek?'

>'Nope.' the rider denied.<br>'Maybe this will help you remember him...' Astrid snarled, putting the blade of her axe to his throat.

>'Astrid!' I scolded, shocked. 'Leave him alone.'<br>'Sorry, Hiccup.' she apologized.

>'It's okay, Astrid. I'm just worried that you might kill someone by doing that.'<br>'Stop talking! Look, I swear to the gods, I don't know anybody called Alvin!' the rider interrupted.

>'If you're not working for him, who are you working for?' I asked.<br>'Hey, guys!' Tuff shouted. 'We're supposed to be taking this guy to Stoick, remember?'

>'Oh. You're right, Tuff. Let's go, guys.'<br>'Yeah, I know. I'm always right.' Tuff retorted, but I couldn't be bothered to reply.

>'I still don't trust him.' Astrid protested, as we were flying off, the rider still in Toothless's claws.<p>

## 22. Scars, and Mind-Controlled Nightmares

**\*\*After a month and a day of not updating this, here you go! :P\*\***

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Eret's POV<strong>

>The rider they had called 'Tuff' had reminded the blonde girl, and the lead rider, that they were meant to be taking me to their Chief, but they hadn't done that at all. Instead, they had flown on their dragons to an arena-like place, which had metal bars criss-crossing the top of it.<br>As they approached the entrance, I could see a sign above the entrance- it looked like a dragon. The dragon was black, and curled up. This must have been the symbol of this place. Below that, there were letters, which I couldn't read, although I recognized them to be runes, which read: Berk 'Dragon Training Academy'.

>They flew through the entrance, which was sloped, and had a metal gate for a door. I was dropped roughly onto the floor- but Drago's done that to me a few times, too. Drago's dragons stayed at the entrance, growling menacingly.<br>The lead rider got off his dragon, which was growling too.

>'Hey, it's okay, bud.' he said to it, so quietly it was practically a whisper. I wondered if there was perhaps some threat in there- another thing I've gotten used to with Drago- but no, it seemed as if he was genuinely trying to be kind. And he'd called it 'bud', too- which is not normally something you'd say if you were angry.<br>Then, even more amazingly, he actually put his hand on the beast's nose. Not his foot, but his hand. And it didn't bite it off.

>The rider must have noticed my astonishment, because he grabbed my arm, in one small, skinny, hand, and helped me up, smiling.<br>'It's amazing, isn't it?' he asked, probably not expecting me to respond in the way I did.

>I yanked my arm away from his hand.<br>'No! It's not amazing!



You're doing it all wrong! You're meant to put your \_foot\_ on its nose, not your \_hand\_! Dragons aren't \_equals\_! They're \_below\_ humans! And what're you doing \_talking\_ to it?! You're meant to yell, and scream at it. They won't listen to you, otherwise!'

>The rider didn't say anything, all through my outburst- just blinked a few times, as if he couldn't understand what I was saying.<br>'But that's...\_cruel\_...' he said quietly, in shock.

>'<em>Cruel</em>?! Who cares if it's \_cruel\_?!'

>'I do...' he squeaked.<br>'I don't care about what a little runt like you thinks!'

>His dragon growled, and terror made me stop. The only reaction the rider made to my comment, was going over to the beast, and trying to soothe it again.<br>'I wouldn't call Hiccup a runt, if I were you.' she said dangerously.

>'Hiccup?! He's called <em>Hiccup</em>?! Awwwww, is it to keep all the little trolls and gnomes away- \_OWWWWW\_!' I howled, as the blonde girl twisted my wrist, and made me fall sideways to the ground.

>'<em>Astrid</em>...' Hiccup said warningly. 'Don't make me tell you again.'

>'Fine. But I'm not helping him up.' she decided.<br>'Point taken. You don't like him.'

>'The feeling's mutual.' I muttered.<br>She lunged towards me, as if she was going to hurt me again, but this time, I cowered away- yet another thing I had learnt from working for Drago.

>Hiccup walked over to me, and started talking to me soothingly, like he'd done to his dragon.<br>'Hey, it's okay. Come with me, and I'll show you something.'

>He grabbed my arm, once again, and this time, I didn't pull away, like a naughty child. But even if I had, it wouldn't have worked- the boy was stronger than he looked.<br>Once I was upright again, he walked towards the other riders, who were assembled in front of him, like he was the teacher, and they were the pupils.

>'Okay, guys. There's some dragons at the entrance of the academy-'  
'Yeah, thanks for stating the obvious, Hiccup.' The rider they had called 'Tuff' said sarcastically.

>'So, anyway, before I was so rudely interrupted-' he glared at Tuff- 'could someone open the gate to the Academy?' Hiccup asked.<br>'I'll do it.' the stocky rider volunteered. He jogged over to the gate, and flexed his muscles, before opening the gate, grunting- but afterwards, acting like it was no effort at all- and running back to where Hiccup and the other riders were, before he was killed by crazy dragons.

>Hiccup walked towards the dragons, calmly, not yelling, or growling at them. The dragons looked slightly confused, but also relieved, at his lack of this.<br>All except one dragon- a Monstrous Nightmare. It came scuttling towards him, intent on killing Hiccup, but still he did not scream at it. He placed a hand on its neck, just before it leapt on him, and it, too, looked confused that he was not screaming at it, before closing its eyes, and growling in pleasure.

>Hiccup was scratching the Nightmare's neck, moving his hands over to a particular part of it, and he scratched this part.<br>The Nightmare made a noise of surprise, and the dragon's pupils, now full, not slitted from the Bewilderbeast's control, rolled over in its eyes, and its body, too, rolled over, onto the ground.

>I gasped.<br>'Did you kill it...?'

>Hiccup turned around.<br>'No, it's sleeping.'

>'But...why didn't you use a dart?'  
'Because we don't have them here, although you probably do, where you come from. Besides, even if we did, we wouldn't use them- there's much better ways to pacify a

dragon, and the way I just demonstrated is just one of them.'

>'Oh,' I replied.<br>Hiccup knelt down next to the Nightmare, and started to examine it. He gasped in horror, suddenly.

>'<em>Scars<em>... and they look like they're claw-marks...'

>Fishlegs came and knelt down next to Hiccup.<br>'Hiccup, they're probably just from dragon-fights.' he reasoned.

>'But these scars are all in a specific place around his body. If he'd got in a dragon-fight, his opponent would just slash its claws randomly. So it can't be a dragon... it has to have been a human.'  
'But what human would have claws, instead of fingers?' the blonde rider asked. She went over to me, and glanced at my hands, as if checking that I didn't have claws hidden behind my fingernails.

>'Well, <em>he<em> certainly doesn't.' Tuff pointed out.

>'<em>Thanks for stating the obvious<em>.' I mimicked what he'd said to Hiccup earlier.

>'Wait... are you trying to make fun of me...? No, you couldn't be. That voice doesn't even sound like me.'  
>I ignored him, and focused on what Hiccup was saying.

>'I- I don't know. Maybe Gobber's got a new prosthetic...? But he wouldn't be that cruel, to deliberately scar a dragon.

<em>Nobody<em> on Berk would. Except-'

>'Mildew.' the blonde rider finished for him.<br>'But he threw the Zippleback feet into the ocean!'

>'Good point.'  
'I think the best thing to do would be to ask my dad.' Hiccup decided, and went back to examining the dragon. He opened one of its eyelids, and gasped again.

>The Nightmare's pupils had gone back to slits.<br>'Astrid, do you remember when we went to the Dragons' Nest?' Hiccup asked.

>'Yes.'  
'Well, when Toothless was in there, his pupils had turned to slits, too... And we could hear that strange humming sound.'

>'Yes.' she repeated.<br>'So, I think that humming sound might have been the Red Death's 'song'. It... it was controlling Toothless.'

>His dragon snarled, at the mention of this dragon, that sounded a lot like a Bewilderbeast.<br>'So... what are you saying?'

>'I'm saying that I think this dragon might be controlled, too... But the Red Death is dead. So what could be controlling it?'<br>He turned to me, as if expecting me to give the answer, which I didn't.

>'Okay, so he's giving us the silent treatment. Great. Luckily, I have more important things to deal with...'  
>Hiccup turned away, and approached the other dragons, who bowed their heads, expecting a foot to be placed onto them.

>'Um...I think you broke them, Hiccup...' Tuff remarked.<br>'Yeah. I think I did... or someone else did. They've been tamed before. Wild dragons wouldn't do that...'

>'But <em>who<em> tamed them?' The blonde rider was asking me, rather than Hiccup. She walked up to me threateningly.

>'We'll just put you in jail until you tell us.'  
'Whoa, whoa, Astrid. I'm sorry, but you're not the Chief. My dad is. He'll decide what'll happen to him. But before we do that, we need to-'

>Before Hiccup had even finished talking, the dragons went into the open cages around the 'Academy', as if they knew what he was going to

say.<br>'-get the dragons into their cages.' he finished. 'Well, I guess we don't need to do that anymore. Come on, guys, we're going to see my dad.'

>The blonde rider climbed onto her dragon, and got it to take off- but it wasn't moving. I was just wondering why, when suddenly, I felt myself being lifted off the ground, and I felt the dragon's claws cutting into my arms.<br>'Just in case you refuse to come with us.' she told me, and then the dragon flew off, following behind the other riders.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>I'll also be writing the first chapter of 'The Boy' later! ;) </strong>

### 23. Talking to the Chief

\*\*Just telling you now; I have big plans for this fanfic, which were thought of today! ;)\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Stoick's POV</strong>

>I heard dragons landing outside the Great Hall, so I got up from the bench I was sitting on, and walked over to the double doors.<br>They were opened, and Hiccup and the other kids walked in... but Astrid was pushing in a stranger, pressing the blade of her axe to his throat as she did so.

>'Leave him, Astrid.'  
>'Sorry, Chief.' she apologized, and released both her axe and her arms from him.

>'It's alright. Now, Hiccup, what did you come to see me for?'<br>'Well, first of all, this guy here-' he pointed to the stranger. 'Toothless and I, and the other riders, captured him, and brought him to the Academy. He had some dragons following behind him in the sky, when me and Toothless abducted him from his dragon- a Nadder.'

>I stroked my beard suspiciously.<br>'We let the dragons into the Academy, and when I started walking up to them, they looked confused, but they didn't attack- all except a Nightmare, which I pacified. I examined it, and opened one of its eyelids. The pupils were slits. Me and Astrid think that something might be controlling it, because Toothless's pupils looked similar when he was being controlled by the Red Death in the Dragons' Nest.'

>'The big dragon?'<br>'Yes. But that can't be possible, because it's dead! So there has to be some other dragon controlling it... but what could it be? We asked the stranger this, but he gave us the silent treatment.'

>'What else did you find?'<br>'Well, this was the last thing I was going to talk to you about.'

>'Go on.'  
>'We found scars on the Nightmare. But they couldn't have been from a dragonfight, because if it did get them in a dragonfight, the opponent would just slash its claws randomly, not in a specific spot. So, I think the only explanation is that it got those scars from human claws... because the human was being cruel to them. But what human would have claws for fingers? I don't know anybody on the island who does, though.'

>I was silent.<br>'Oh, and one more thing.'

>I didn't reply.<br>'When I walked up to the other dragons again, this time, they bowed their heads. Wild dragons don't do that. It's

almost as if they've been tamed before...'  
>'Broken.' Tuffnut interrupted.<br>Hiccup sighed.  
>'Yes, Tuffnut; broken. And when I said that we needed to get the dragons in their cages, they went into them before I'd even finished what I said.'<br>Hiccup had been so busy talking, that he didn't even notice my silence until he finished.  
>'Dad...?' he asked worriedly, waving a hand in front of my face.'<br>'I'm fine, Hiccup!'  
>'Okay. So, what do you think?'<br>Claws instead of fingers...the dragons had bowed their heads... These pieces of evidence added up to something I didn't, couldn't think about...  
>'Hiccup. Put the Academy on lockdown- Arvendil's Fire-style.'<br>'With the super-cool secret bunker?' Tuffnut interrupted again.  
>'No.'<br>His face fell.  
>'Anyway, lock up all the dragons, and the stranger too. I'll question him personally later.'<br>'Dad?' Hiccup asked. 'Will Toothless be locked up, too?'  
>'No, son. He's too important.'<br>'So our dragons aren't?' Astrid demanded angrily.  
>'No, Astrid. You don't need to worry about them. They'll be safe. Besides, I don't think Toothless'd like being locked up again, after his- and Hiccup's- experience with the Outcasts.'<br>'Okay, sir. Is that all your orders?'  
>'Yes.'<br>Astrid nodded, and proceeded to press the blade of her axe to the stranger's throat again, and push him out of the Hall.  
>With the kids gone, I sat down heavily on the bench, and digested this latest terrifying piece of information...<br>...The only man I knew who had claws instead of fingers, at least on one of his hands, and claimed he could control dragons, just like Hiccup could, was...  
  
>Drago Bludvist. Those dragons, that were following behind the stranger when Hiccup and Toothless abducted him from his dragon, might have been his.<br>In which case, he was the kind of man I knew who would not take kindly to us 'stealing' his dragons.

## 24. An Intruder to the Academy

**\*\*Hiccup's POV\*\***

>'Okay, guys. I'd say we're just about done locking up the Academy- and the dragons.'<br>The other riders looked sadly at their dragons inside their cages, and the dragons did the same.  
>'Don't worry, guys. It's for the best. And anyway, my dad said that as soon as we're done locking up the Academy, we should go back to our houses, and lock them up too. So, come on.' I climbed onto Toothless.<br>'Hey! Don't leave me!' the stranger called from inside his prison.  
>I ignored him, and I flew back to my house, while the others walked.<br>**\*\*Eret's POV\*\***  
>I awoke suddenly, much later, very late at night.<br>Maybe my brain had woken me up because it knew I would be in danger.  
>As it turned out, it was right.<br>Drago's dragons, as well as the riders' ones, sniffed the air anxiously.  
>The dragons that belonged to Drago, as I had witnessed him telling many of them, whimpered, and put their heads down onto the floor. But the riders' dragons roared, and growled, sensing danger, like I did.<br>Two huge shapes walked into the Academy, noses to the ground.  
  
>Rumblehorns. He had used them to track us.<br>The dragons stopped at

each cage, sniffing around. When they caught the scent of the other dragons, inside, they grunted in delight.

>The owner of the claw, which was used to unlock the doors, did much the same.<br>Quickly, silently, every single dragon was released, except the riders' ones, and a foot was placed onto their snout.

>'You may have been stolen from me, but you are still mine.' he reminded the dragons.<br>I could see his boots, made with the fur of a black bear, walking towards my prison.

>Suddenly, out of the darkness, there came a claw, which ripped my furs, and found its way to my throat.<br>Drago made a sound between a growl and a chuckle, at my terror.

>'You have been selling my dragons to <em>them<em>...' he snarled.

>'N-no, Drago, of course not, it wasn't like that...' I choked.<br>'Are you calling me a liar...?'

>'No...'  
>'Good. But if you are not calling me a liar...\_WHY ARE MY DRAGONS IN THOSE CAGES\_?!' he roared.

>'They... they... captured... me... and... they... locked... them up...here...' I gasped, struggling to breathe.<br>'And... that's... not... the only... thing... they... have... locked up...here...'

>Drago released his claw from my throat.<br>The Rumblehorns hadn't sniffed the riders' dragons out, because they didn't know their scent. And it was impossible to tell if anything was in the cages, because it was too dark in there.

>Pulling a lantern containing Fireworms out of his cape, and hanging it onto his staff, Drago shined the light into each of the cages, until he found the riders' dragons.<br>He smiled, and motioned for the disguised soldiers to shoot.

>The now sleeping dragons were dragged out of their cages.<br>'Take them to the ship.' Drago growled.

>Once the soldiers had gone, he put his claw to my throat again.<br>'For showing me where the thieves' dragons were, boy, I will let you live. They will be valuable to me, and so will you... for now. But that doesn't mean that your attempt at running away, and trying to sell my dragons to \_them\_, will go unpunished. I just haven't decided how I will make you pay yet.'

>He smiled menacingly, as he had an idea.<br>'For now, until I decide, you will be in prison with the thieves' dragons, looking after them.'

>I nodded, as much as I could, and there was little else I could do.<br>'Good to know you agree with me. I \_hate\_ it when people don't, as the Viking Chieftains learned.'

>He growled, in gruesome happiness of that memory, and released me again.<br>With the claw that he had held my furs with, he unlocked my prison door, and grabbed me again, flinging me onto the cold, stone floor of the Academy.

>I was winded by this, so I didn't get up immediately, as he'd expected me to.<br>He grabbed me by the back of my furs with his metal arm, and lifted me onto my feet.

>Then he whacked me around the head, with the same arm, to get me walking.<br>So, with my head bleeding, and the blood dripping down onto the floor of the Academy, I followed Drago to his ship.

## 25. Detective Work

\*\*Hiccup's POV\*\*

I was awoken by the sound of Toothless whining, and pawing at my bedroom door as if he was a dog.

>'What is it, bud?' I asked tiredly.<br>He bounded over to me urgently, and gently took my good foot in his mouth, pulling on it slightly, as if he was trying to get me out of bed.

>In good-natured bewilderment, I did what he wanted, and opened the door for him too.<br>Running out of it immediately, he stopped at the stairs, and made a noise, as if he wanted me to follow.

>'Do you want to go out flying, bud, is that it? You must be really bored; we've been cooped up all night, like chickens. But it's only because Dad's paranoid-'<br>I stopped talking, as the thought came to me that perhaps Dad wasn't so paranoid after all. Toothless had been trying to warn me, and it wasn't the first time he'd done something like this.

>The time before, I hadn't listened. But now I would. I had to.<br>'Come on, bud.' I said, climbing onto his back, and clicking my foot into the stirrup, with as much urgency as the speed Toothless was flying.

>We stopped at each of the riders' houses, each of them annoyed to be woken up, but their faces turned pale with fear for their dragons when I told them what I thought Toothless had sensed.<br>I gave Astrid a taxi ride on Toothless's back to the Academy, because if something had happened, she was the best person to come with me.

>As I'd feared, something *had* happened.

>The dragons, every single one, had gone.<br>And there was some blood on the ground, next to the stranger's prison.

>Astrid yelled in rage, and started swinging her axe wildly around her head, somewhat frighteningly resembling the person who I would later find out to be the one who had taken the dragons, shouting:<br>'He took Stormfly! I swear to Odin, when I find him, I am going to MURDER him, like he murdered the dragons!'

>'Whoa, whoa, whoa, Astrid,' I said calmly, quelling her rage slightly. 'Let's just calm down. Okay?''<br>'Okay.' She certainly didn't look like she was planning to calm down, but, nonetheless, I continued.

>'He hasn't *murdered* the dragons; that's human blood, not dragon blood. And I've seen enough of mine to know the difference.'

>'It's true! Hiccup, remember that time when we were five, and we were playing boar-in-the-middle with rocks-'<br>'Yes, Tuffnut, and I don't really want, or need, to be reminded of that- wait; Tuff, you're a genius!' I exclaimed.

>'I know. We knew that already, but *you* probably discovered it when we had the Eel Effect.'

>'Yeah, whatever... Anyway...' I sighed, more exsasperated with Tuff now than happy with him.<br>'When Ruff and Tuff hit me in the head with those rocks, there was a lot of blood- like there is on the ground. And a rock is a heavy object. So, it looks like the stranger- I'm guessing it's the stranger, because the blood's the closest to his prison- was hit with a heavy object. And one of the rocks that hit me was sharp, and it cut slashes in my head. I think that the stranger must have been hit with something sharp, too... but what?'

>'Claws...?' Astrid suggested nervously.<br>'Yeah, maybe. But we know that the stranger doesn't have claws- at least, I don't think he does- he wouldn't hit and claw himself in the head. So it had to be someone else that did it... someone who was angry at him... and now that we know that those scars on the Nightmare were made by someone who had claws instead of fingers on one of their hands, I'm guessing

that that hand is also metal. It would have to be, to draw that much blood from the stranger's head.

>'But why would the person be angry at the stranger...?' I asked, more to myself than Astrid.<br>'Because... you saw the way he scarred the Nightmare, Hiccup. He must think that he can treat dragons how he wants... because they belong to him- that's why they bowed their heads when you walked up to them... they've been tamed before, like you said; you were right...'

>'And the dragons that were following behind the stranger in the sky when we found him... must belong to the person, too.' I realised.<br>'And we brought his dragons to the Academy, and we locked them up- well, actually, they locked themselves up- and then we went to Dad, and he told us to lock our dragons up... and now, they're gone. So, the person must have broken into the Academy some time last night, and taken his dragons... our dragons... and the stranger.'

>'Wow, how did you get all that from a pool of blood?!' Tuff asked; he'd clearly not been listening.<br>'Never mind...' I sighed, muttering, 'It's probably too complicated for your brain to follow anyway...'

>Tuff didn't hear, luckily.<br>'Look, all we need to do right now, is go down to the docks and steal a ship. Hopefully, if we hurry, we can steal it before my dad gets up for Chiefing.'

>'So, where are we going, Hiccup?' Tuff asked again.<br>'We're going to save our dragons.'

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Sorry if you found Hiccup's detective work somewhat confusing :P; I find it hard to explain things like that.  
:P<strong>

## 26. Back on Drago's Ship

**\*\*Hey, guys! Here's the next chapter! But first, I'd like to talk about what's going to happen in it, which I never do. :P**

>Because I was curious to find out what the proper name for Drago's dragonskin is, I Googled the difference between a cloak and a cape. It turns out that Drago's dragonskin is actually a cloak, because unlike a cape, cloaks usually go past the thighs, and a cape usually doesn't, and cloaks tend to often be floor-length, or even trail the floor. Drago's dragonskin is quite long; I remember seeing that it reached his boots in one particular shot. And historically, cloaks have been used as a status symbol for social class. Drago is the commander of a dragon and human army, and he's also apparently strong enough to take down a Night Fury, so wearing the skin of that dragon would be a way for him to show his status, and it would also be a trophy. So, that's why I call it a cloak instead of a cape in this chapter, and I'll continue to do that. )<br>But, back to discussing the chapter, which I still haven't done... :P

>There's a bit of Stormfly-Eret bonding in this chapter. Hey, I had to include it somehow, didn't I? :D And, at the end of this chapter, you'll probably go 0\_o :P . After I wrote that part, I saved the chapter, and closed Wordpad, but it just seemed like a bit of a dark way to end the chapter, so I added a bit, and ended it on a happy note! :D<strong> **\*\*But, discussing the chapter aside, here it is!**

;)\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong><strong>Eret's POV<strong>

><strong>I froze, and my blood ran cold again, just as it did when I heard this sound in the Berkian prison.

>A claw, unlocking the door to my prison, which was on the ship that belonged to the man who was about to enter, and had the metal hand, which had not only that claw on it, but four more.<br>Drago smiled when he saw me, huddled up in a corner of the prison, terrified that he'd come to give me my punishment.

>'Not yet.' he confirmed, as if he could read my thoughts; and this seemed like a fittingly sinister thing for him to be able to do.<br>He walked over to the Nadder, and loomed over it. The dragon was the equivalent to a hedgehog, what with the darts sticking out of every part of its body, as did the other dragons, and so it couldn't have logically been conscious enough to sense the gigantic man standing over it, but even so, it made a tiny sound; a groan.

>Its wings and feet were bound with strong, metal, fireproof chains, which had barbs along them; the only reason being, seemingly, to scar, and cause as much pain to, whatever was bound with it as much as possible, even, if in a dragon's case, it wasn't conscious enough to sense them, and its mouth was covered with a fireproof muzzle. The other dragons had these things too.<br>Drago, apparently, wasn't satisfied that the dragons, more specifically, the Nadder, couldn't feel the torture instruments that bound them. He kicked the Nadder.

>'Wake up,' he growled.<br>'\_WAKE UP\_!' he roared, obviously knowing that the dragon couldn't hear him, but the fact that it was refusing to obey a command- and he hated that, from both human and dragon- was enough to make him scream at it, because he loved screaming, and probably just wanted a reason to scream at a dragon, and possibly, if the Nadder still refused to obey the command, gods forbid, kill it as a punishment.

>I just hoped that death wasn't going to be <em>my<em> punishment. Better the Nadder than me.

>But instead of killing the Nadder, he knelt down, next to its tail, which contained as many darts as it was covered in, and pulled a spine, unsurprisingly choosing to still cause the dragon pain for refusing to obey a command, although it was not the pain of death.<br>I wanted to warn Drago of what was going to happen, but I didn't for two reasons; if I dared to speak, he would scream at me, too, or change his mind and give me my punishment right here and now, and, knowing dragons as he did, he probably knew what the Nadder was going to do, anyway.

>Instinctively, sensing even through unconsciousness that something was touching its spines, the dragon raised them, and prepared to shoot them at its attacker.<br>With the quickness that only a man who had been fighting dragons all his life, since he was a boy, and lost everything to them, Drago dodged the spines- well, almost. The point of a spine just glanced off his human hand, and for the few seconds that it had been there, it had created a deep gash- adding another scar to the ones which already covered his hands, face, and arms.

>'<em>AAAAHHHHH<em>!' he yelped, but despite the pain, still managing to knock out the Nadder again with his metal arm, causing a terrible grin of pleasure at the yelp of pain the dragon shared too, before becoming unconscious again.

>He wrapped his hand in his cloak, with the expression of pain replacing the one of pleasure, walking out, and slamming the prison door behind him, with a clang as loud as his yelp of pain- but forgetting to lock the door. He couldn't have done it anyway, as his



metal hand could only <em>un<em>lock doors, and his \_human hand\_ wasn't in \_any\_ condition to be doing \_anything\_, wrapped up in his cloak as it was, let alone locking doors.

>Suddenly, inspiration of how I could get out came to me, but I got that thought out of my head as quickly as I could, in case Drago used his apparent thought-reading trick again, or remembered that he hadn't locked the door. The latter was more likely to happen.<br>Instead, I turned my thoughts and my head to the Nadder, which was lying on the ground, its jaw flowering from white to purple with a bruise, which would soon develop into a scar, as Ziist had taught me.

>Feeling saddened by his memory, I touched the Stormcutter medal which he'd given me.<br>Eventually, my thoughts returned to escape, once again- but I thought about the dragons.

>Why was I thinking about <em>them<em> for?! I didn't care what happened to them. Drago could do what he wanted to them- which he'd already done to the Nadder.

>Well, I guess I maybe did feel a <em>little<em> sorry for the Nadder. But not for the others. Definitely not for the others.

>As if on cue, the Nadder stirred slightly, and with a forked-tongue yawn, it woke up. The other dragons did, too. Their eyes looked so <em>sad<em>, as if they wanted their masters and mistresses, and knew that I wasn't any of them. And their masters and mistresses definitely wanted their dragons, too.

>It was then that I made my decision.<br>I walked over to the Nadder, but, as I was expecting it to, it didn't cower. It would soon learn to do that, if it didn't escape, though.

>Looking into the dragon's eyes (which was a mistake, as a dragon's eyes are hypnotic, and I felt dizzy afterwards), I whispered to it, and all of them:<br>'I \_will\_ get you out of here.'

>As I said these words, sudden inspiration came to me once again, and I got up, opening the prison door as quietly as I could, and walked out, looking around me, in case anybody was there- especially a madman wearing a dragonskin cloak.<br>Once I judged the coast was clear, I walked along the line of cells containing sad dragons, intending to go to the blacksmith ship.

>What I didn't realise, on my way there as I was, was that I should have looked behind me.<br>For \_behind\_ me was a man who was silent and sneaky, and hid in the shadows and darkness.

>He revealed his face, which he had covered up to avoid being seen by me, which was as covered in scars as ever, and had piercing green eyes.<br>And his mouth, which was still set in pain from the gash in his hand, released an amused growl from his throat.

>All of these things; his silentness and sneakiness, his hiding in the shadows and darkness, his piercing green eyes, his growling, all of these things, were things that he had, terrifyingly, in common with the dragon whose skin he was cloaked in.<br>And I didn't know it at the time, but a dragon which was the same species as the one which was now a cloak, had a rider on its back. And that rider, and all the other riders, who had lost their dragons, were coming to save what was rightfully theirs.

## 27. Of Legends and Punishments

\*\*I've finally updated Dragons, Trappers, Masters after 20 days :O ! Here are my reasons for not doing so sooner...\*\*

\*\*I broke the hinge on my laptop lid (WHY DID I \_DO\_ THAT?!), and my dad's been gluing it back together for me.\*\*

\*\*I had to go and stay somewhere for a day on Monday half term, and when my dad came to pick me up from said place :P and we were leaving, his car motor didn't start. Which meant that he had to call my mum to come and pick us up in \*\*\*\*\_her\_\*\*\*\* car, and we had to leave his car behind. By the time we got back home, it was about 9:00, which meant that I only had an hour and a half before I had to go to bed.\*\*

\*\*Wednesday half term- Because my dad was starting his new job, it meant that me and my mum had to get up early (which I like doing anyway :P) to drive him there. After doing that, we went to the place where my dad's car had been left, and called a garage to fix it. They came and took his car away, and we waited for a phonecall from them to say that the car had been fixed.\*\*

><strong>Anyway, we waited a long time, until we got a phonecall saying that the problem with the car was a sensory thing in the motor and they also said that the latest that it'd be done by was 4 o'clock. We went to a garden centre to pass the time, and at 5 o'clock, we went to pick up my dad from work, and drove to the garage to get his car. He got in it, and drove home, and I had a chicken fillet burger from the KFC drive-thru. Then, finally, it was <strong>\*\*\_our\_ turn to drive home, by which time I think it was like 8:00. But I couldn't go on my laptop to work on this fanfic, because my dad was still repairing it.\*\*

\*\*Hours in car= Five and a half. :O  
>So, to put it simply, I've had a busy couple of days.  
:P<strong>

\*\*And also, not going to give any spoilers :P, but, relating to the story's plot (no, I haven't got writers' block or anything! :P), I did have something that I wanted to do, and I had how I was going to do that all figured out, but now I've thought of a better idea, and so I want to use that one... which means that I'll have to figure out how that's going to work, too.\*\*  
><strong>But what I'll do is, I'll post all my ideas for what's going to happen next, and I'll let you guys decide which one is best!  
)<strong>

\*\*I've been changing the plot of what's going to happen next a lot, but I will post my drafts. I think the one I've chosen is the best, because it had a lot more options and potential chapters as a result.\*\*

\*\*I actually finished the next chapter a while ago, but I didn't post it, because I wanted to write the "potential chapters". I just felt like I had to write the plot of the idea that I chose before I posted the next chapter. Sorry for my OCD. :D\*\*  
><strong>-Because I've been writing the potential chapters, they tended to get kind of mixed up, so I organised them, which took even more time.<strong>

\*\*So, now you've heard my reasons, I'll get on with what's going to happen in the chapter- there's going to be a new OC, albeit a minor one, as his only appearance is in this chapter, so I'm not sure if he counts as an OC. :/ Still, et me know what you think of him! :D

><strong>  
><strong>Anyway, here's the (really long) chapter!<strong>

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Chapter Twenty-Five - Of Legends and Punishments<br>Eret's POV\*\*

>I scurried along the circular, planked boardwalk around Drago's fleet of ships. There was a ramp leading down to each ship, one of which was metal and fireproof- this lead to the blacksmith ship.<br>My boots made a lot of noise as I walked along the metal plank, which made my stomach jump with terror after every step. Any second now I might be grabbed by a metal, clawed hand, and I would hear a growl of disapproval.

>Thank the gods, this didn't happen.<br>I knocked on the door- this was also metal and fireproof- of the little cabin on the ship which served as the forge.

>The blacksmith didn't come to the door. Instead of hearing footsteps, I heard a hammer banging against metal.<br>I inhaled, and shouted as loud as I dared.

>'<em>HEIMIIK<em>!'

>My voice echoed terrifyingly around the camp.<br>Finally, I heard the sound of hammer ringing against metal stopping, with one final, loud, clang, and heavy footsteps coming towards the door.

>I swallowed hard.<br>Relief washed over Heimiik the blacksmith's face, as he opened the door to see that it was me, not Drago. This look was quickly disguised by sternness, and he snapped:

>'What are you doing here, boy? Don't you know what Drago'll do to both of us if he catches you out here?! You're meant to be looking after the thieves' dragons!'<br>He ended this sentence by yanking me inside the forge, and once we were inside, he drew himself up to his full height, which was as tall as Drago, glaring at me sternly.

>For a second, his sad, tired face, scarred from sparks from the forge, morphed into Drago's.<br>'Uh... well, Heimiik, I've come to get... a needle and thread.'

>'Fine.' he grunted. 'Look through the drawers on the worktable. I've got ten more dragons' armour to make by tomorrow!' he finished, going back to his anvil.<br>'Right.' I replied. I made to go over to the worktable, and look through the chests of drawers, as he'd said, but I just couldn't help but look around the forge instead.

>Dragonskin covered every surface in the forge, although everything was fireproof anyway; Drago couldn't afford for this place to burn down. The forge was the place where everything in his army was made; weapons, dragons' armour, war machines, everything. I understood why Drago pushed the blacksmith so hard.<br>'How many dragons were murdered to ensure that this forge was completely fireproof?' I wondered.

>'Too many to say. I watched them all die.' I expected there to be bloodthirsty, vicious glee in Heimiik's tone, but there was only sadness.<br>'Oh.' I said.

>I walked over to a Stormcutter skin, and examined it.<br>'That,' Heimiik informed me, without turning around, 'is the skin of the Stormcutter that murdered the last leader of the trappers. The story of how he died has sort of become a legend; but when you came, everybody stopped talking about it.'

>'Why?'<br>'Why? Because Drago ordered everyone not to, of course. He does that every time a new trapper comes to replace the murdered one. And sometimes... the trappers aren't murdered by dragons...'

>'Who- or what- are they murdered by, then?'<br>'You ask an awful lot of questions, boy,' Heimiik grumbled. 'Better not let Drago catch you asking them. Anyway, sometimes Drago murders trappers.'

>I gasped. 'Why would he do that?'<br>'For returning empty-handed, being traitors, things like that.' he answered.

>'And why does Drago order everyone not to talk about when a trapper was murdered when a new one comes?'<br>'Because, if they were murdered by a dragon, the legend would probably scare a new trapper... like you, for example. And if they're murdered by Drago, he makes sure that it's very secret... done so that nobody knows... because if they did, some of the less loyal members of his forces might start a rebellion, a munity.'

>'How could they do that?'<br>'Think about it, boy. There's probably more less loyal members of Drago's forces than he thinks... which would include dragons. He's trained everybody, human and dragon, to kill... so they might kill him.

>'And I, for one, don't have a problem with that. "Join me, and you will make the weapons that will destroy the beasts that took so much from you.", he said. What I didn't know back then, was that I would actually be making the things that would protect them, not destroy them.' Heimiik seemed to be talking to himself now, angrily.<br>'Anyway, speaking of murdering people... what was the last leader of the trappers' name?' I asked.

>'Horvutah.'<br>I suddenly remembered something that Ziist had said; about how it was a sort of trappers' tradition for the second-in-command of the trappers to wear a disc depicting the dragon species that had killed his leader. But why would this be a tradition?

>I asked Heimiik this.<br>'Drago makes the second-in-commands wear the discs, because he wants to keep the hate going. Hate for the dragons; hate for the beast that murdered their leader. That emotion is the reason he started this whole army anyway.

>'It's the guiding force behind his plan. If there's no hate for the dragons, then he can't make people unite in the hope to get rid of it. Of course, I don't believe that, anyway.'<br>I desperately tried to change the subject, in terror that Drago would hear.

>'I've heard a bit about the legend; the Stormcutter that murdered Horvutah had a son, didn't it?'<br>'Yes, and it was captured, and served in the dragon army for a while. It was sent out on a mission... but it decided to run away in the course of it.'

>'Where did it go?'<br>'We don't know. Don't you think that if we did, Drago'd be sending out practically everyone to go and look for it?'

>'Well, yes, but-'<br>'I think it's good that it's run away. Hopefully, now it won't have to worry about being re-captured ever again. Wish I was as lucky as that dragon.' he sighed.

>Suddenly, we heard footsteps approaching the forge.<br>'Quick, boy!' Heimiik yelled in a strangled whisper. 'Get the needle and thread, and \_go\_!'

>I grabbed the items from one of the drawers, finding exactly what I needed in my terror- but I wasn't able to stuff them into my furs.<br>The reason for this walked into the forge, and went over to Heimiik.

>'What were you telling him to go for, <em>blacksmith</em>? Why would he need to get out of the forge quickly? Is it because he was...\_running away\_?' Drago's green eyes lit up with evil triumph. He walked over to me, apparently satisfied with his questions for Heimiik being left unanswered.

>'<em>Well</em>? \_Was it\_?' he persisted. He caught sight of the needle and thread, clutched in my hand.

>'What's <em>that</em>?' He snatched it.

>'A needle and thread, Drago.' I told him helpfully.<br>His eyes narrowed, but then lit up again.

>'Maybe you will learn to watch how you speak to your master once you have had your punishment.'  
>'You're not my master.' I protested.

>This time his eyes did not light up, but stayed narrowed.  
>'I am your master, boy, because you are working for me. A slave calls the person he works for his master, so why should that not apply to dragon trappers?' His eyes lit up for the third time, mocking me, challenging me, daring me to argue back.

>'And blacksmiths.' he added cruelly.  
>'But I have more important things to do than argue with you, boy. Like giving you your punishment.' he smiled.

>My stomach dropped at the mention of this.  
>He walked over to a rack, which had several small metal things hanging off it, and grabbed the last of these things. Walking over to the forge's fire, he placed the object into it, until it began to sizzle. The sound made him smile, as if he was already imagining that that was the sound that it would make on my skin.

>He took the object out of the fire, and placed it onto the worktable, looking back at me, and smiling in the way that he would do, five years later, when he and Stoick the Vast circled each other, before their fight, as if waiting for my horror at what this object was to fully unfold.  
>It was a brand, in the shape of one of the emblems on the sails of Drago's ships.

>He growled at satisfaction at my terror, and wrapped the still-burning brand inside his cloak, but not enough so that the fire would be extinguished.  
>'But, back to my question. What is that needle and thread, as you told me it was, for?'>

'Uh, um... it's t-to s-sew up t-that r-rip in m-my furs that you gave me with your claws.'  
>Please, gods, buy it, please, I prayed.

>He growled in suspicion, and whacked me with his metal arm, in such a way that it almost required me to repair a second rip in my furs, but, thank the gods, it looked like he had bought it.  
>He grunted at me to follow him out of the forge, which I did.

>Our entrance out of the forge, and into the shipyard, was greeted by a growl of thunder. Drago repeated the sound.  
>Suddenly, a look of vicious glee entered his eyes and his face.

>He turned to me, pulling the brand out of his cloak.  
>'Time for your punishment, boy...'

\* \* \*

><p>'Remember, boy,' Drago snarled, as he held the brand near my chest, 'Drago Bludvist *never* forgets. He does not forget to ask a question, and he especially does not forget one of his trappers' failure to bring back a Monstrous Nightmare to its master.'

>A flash of lightning lit up his scarred face, as he finished saying this.  
>That was the last thing that happened before he pressed the brand onto my chest.

## 28. Setting Up Camp

\*\*Hey, guys! Sorry I haven't been updating for a while- I haven't abandoned this story or anything; although I'm planning to start writing a new one, maybe in the Christmas holidays; but even when I'm doing that, I'll still continue writing this one- it's just that Berk's Forumvine isn't working at the moment :(, and I kind of forgot that I could still post the chapters here. \*facepalm\*\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Hiccup's POV<strong>

\* \* \*

><p>Far away in the distance, I heard a scream of pain, followed by a crash of lightning, the biggest one yet, which narrowly missed Toothless's prosthetic tail. He yelped, and I stroked him reassuringly.<p>

I leant down from Toothless's back, and called down to the other Riders- well, sailors, as they didn't have their dragons- following us on the ship.

'Okay, guys, I think we should go find an island to camp out at for the night, for a few reasons. One: It's getting late. Two: We've been searching the sea all day, and we still haven't found the Dragon Thief-'

'Um, Hiccup, do I need to remind you again, as I did when we were searching for the Zippleback feet, that the ocean is really vast, and frankly, we haven't got a hope in Valhalla of finding the Dragon Thief in one day.'

'But don't you want to see your precious baby, little princess Meatlug again?' Snotlout sneered.

'Snotlout, don't say that!' Fishlegs cried. 'Of course I do! Oh, what're they doing to my baby...?'

With that last sentence, Fishlegs promptly burst into tears, and ran into the ship's cabin.

'Okay, um, Fishlegs, just come out when we find an island to camp out at, okay?'

I was answered by sniffing, and a teary, 'Okay, Hiccup.'

I turned to Snotlout.

'Snotlout, come on. Stop making it worse. We're all missing our dragons. Just because you're missing Hookfang, doesn't mean that you have to take it out on poor Fishlegs.'

'I'm not missing Hookfang!' he snapped. 'He's a warrior. Like me.'

'Ugh. Not this again.' Astrid sighed.

'Hey Snotlout, remember what happened to Hookfang when he lost his flaming ability?' Tuff asked him.

Although he tried to hide it, I could see a bit of sadness come into Snotlout's eyes.

'He's probably like that now. Broken.'

Snotlout promptly punched him into the sea (which Ruffnut assisted

him in), and Toothless hauled a dripping wet Tuff back onto the deck of the ship.

'\_Anyway\_, as I was \_saying\_...' I sighed.

'Reason three, there's a storm going on, and Thor knows what'll happen if I keep on flying, and you keep on sailing, in this weather; Toothless's tail, or the ship, could be struck by lightning, and then we could drown... which could happen anyway...' I added grimly.

'Fine.' Astrid sighed. 'Let's just go.'

And with that, I flew, and they sailed, off to find an island.

\* \* \*

><p>'Right, guys, according to my map,' I shouted above the wind, which was blowing in my hair, 'I think a good place to camp might be... this island here!' I gestured to a small island nearby, which seemed perfect.<p>

We landed both Night Fury and ship, and started to set up camp.

'Snotlout and Astrid,' I told them, 'you go and fetch firewood.' I gave them this job, because they were the least likely ones to do something stupid- well, besides Snotlout flirting with Astrid, which I told him not to do- or get scared, like Fishlegs.

'What're we going to do?' Ruff and Tuff asked.

'Go to the ship, get the packs, and... \_un\_pack them. Hopefully, that's the one thing that you can do which won't get you into trouble.'

Obviously, Ruff and Tuff begged to differ.

'There's loads of ways we could get into trouble by unpacking,' Tuff said, as they both nonetheless did what I asked.

'We could... put the bearskin blankets over our heads, and scare certain people, for example.' Which was exactly that Tuffnut proceeded to do. Fishlegs screamed at his impression of a bear.

'Fishlegs,' I sighed, 'you're not that much of a wimp, are you?'

His reply was interrupted by a sneering, 'Look who's talking,' from Snotlout, who had returned with Astrid from collecting firewood.

'Really. You're going there. Again.' she said, adding to the amount of times that I'd heard her say those words.

'Really. You're saying that. Again.' I teased.

This earned me a good-natured, equally as teasing, punch in the arm.

'Well, at least you didn't do that to me, right Astrid?' Snotlout said.

'Not \_didn't\_. \_Haven't\_.' she corrected him, and did indeed give him a punch in the arm.

'I don't hit girls.' Snotlout replied, when Astrid dared him to hit her back.

'Good,' she replied, '...for you.'

Then she sat down on a nearby log, but Snotlout didn't try to sit next to her.

'Anyway, Hiccup, on the subject of what you were saying earlier, I'm not a wimp, I'm just tired, scared, and jumpy. And if you don't mind, I'll go to bed.'

'Sure, Fishlegs.' I told him.

He snatched one of the blankets which Ruff and Tuff had carelessly strewn about the sandy ground, laid down, and spread it over himself.

'Goodnight.' he huffed.

'Night.' I said.

I turned to Snotlout and Astrid.

'I think you should both arrange the firewood in a pile, since you were the ones who collected it, so that Toothless can light it up.'

Said Night Fury was already readying his fire, and at my command, 'Light 'em up, bud,' he shot the flame at the piled-up firewood, and then, sensing his job was done, he walked off, and curled up.

Everyone, including me, crowded around the fire. Astrid was staring at the flames, a sad expression in her eyes.

'What's wrong?' I asked her.

'It's just... you know Deadly Nadders have the hottest fire in the dragon world.'

'Yes, as you've told us a million times...' Snotlout shouted.

Astrid glared at him, and carried on.

'Stormfly would have burnt that firewood to a crisp. But she couldn't, because she's not here...'

I could have sworn to Odin that I saw a tear glisten in her eye. But this moment was interrupted by Snotlout, once again.

'Hey, you know Hookfang could have burnt that firewood to a crisp too.'



Instead of Astrid retorting, Tuffnut did.

'No, he couldn't. Belch could've, though.'

'No he couldn't!' Snotlout protested.

'Could.'

'Could not!'

'Guys, please. Just be quiet and go to sleep.'

Tuffnut pretended to do so, grabbing one of the bearskin blankets... but then he dropped the end of it into the fire.

'\_Or\_...' he whispered, '\_we could set bearskin blankets on fire\_...'

'Tuffnut!' I snapped.

'Okay, okay,' he grumbled, swatting the flame out, lying down, and spreading the bearskin blanket over himself. Astrid, Snotlout, and Ruff did the same, but I didn't. I continued to stare at the flames, and Toothless got up and sat beside me.

I started thinking about Dad. How he'd probably passed by the Academy on his Chiefing duties, thinking that it was strange that we weren't there, checking everywhere else, asking everyone, until he went to the docks, and noticed the missing ship, finally coming to the conclusion that we'd gone.

I thought about how he'd been going out of his mind with panic, practically tearing his beard out, ordering a search party for us.

I just hoped that he would come soon.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Drago's POV<strong>

\* \* \*

><p>A soldier came running up to me, panting.<p>

'What is it?' I snapped.

'Sir, we've been patrolling the nearby islands, and...'

'\_Yes\_?' I demanded, my patience leaving me.

'Well, we saw... a boy, and some other people, maybe his friends. His friends were sleeping, tucked up in bearskin blankets, and the boy was staring at a campfire that I'm guessing he made, and beside him was... a \_Night Fury\_!'

The soldier instinctively flinched when I moved, as if I was going to hurt him, but I walked past him, and faced him again. He stood to attention.

'You will tell the men to ready the ships, and we will sail to this

island. Is that clear?'

'Yes, sir.' he gulped, and ran off to carry out my order.

'In the meantime, I will go and visit the trapper.' I decided aloud.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Eret's POV<strong>

\* \* \*

><p>I sat in my cell, repairing the rip in my furs, just like I had told the man who was about to enter, every now and then letting out a yelp of pain, as my fingers touched my tattoo.<p>

'Does it hurt?' a voice asked, smiling nastily, even though I could not see him doing so, and had not seen him even enter yet.

'Oh... Drago!' I realised, looking up to see him towering over me, dropping the needle and thread in my terror.

'No, it doesn't hurt.' I lied.

'There is a punishment for lying to me, as well as there is one for disobeying my orders... and you have already recieved that one.' he said, smiling once again at the part that he had added.

He took a pair of cruelly sharp shears out of his cloak, enjoying my look of terror.

'I-is that my punishment for lying to you...?' I gasped.

'No. These shears are not going to be used on you... although that may change. They are going to be used on the dragons.'

And with that, he knelt down next to the Nadder, once again, and lined up the shears with its wings. He clipped both of them, the dragon's yelps of pain in its sleep only making him smile. He repeated this with the other dragons.

'Why did you do that?' I asked him.

He glared at me for a while for asking him a question, and then explained.

'I am sailing, with the men- but not with you- to an island, where, according to a report, a boy, his sleeping friends, and a \_Night Fury\_ are currently on.'

'Why am I not coming with you?'

'I do not need you on the voyage, so you will remain here, in your cell, looking after the dragons- which, in case you decided to try anything, which could cause them to escape, cannot fly, because I have clipped their wings.'

He looked back at the dragons, which were still whimpering in pain in their sleep, smiling in vicious glee.

'Goodbye.' he said promptly, and walked out, closing the door behind him- and this time, locking it.

I waited until I couldn't hear his footsteps anymore, and retrieved the needle and thread from the floor, staring at it, thinking up a plan.

\_If I could just sew the tears in the dragons'\_ \_wings back together\_...

## 29. Stories - Part One: Qomorah's Story

**\*\*The full chapter which I tried to upload was so big- 8,000 words!- that I think I crashed the system! :P So, I'll be splitting this chapter into parts!\*\***

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Hiccup's POV<strong>

\* \* \*

><p>Was it my imagination, or did the lightning, and the churning-up of the sea seem to get louder, and stronger, as Toothless and I continued to sit, staring into the flames?<p>

My best friend growled uncertainly at this.

'It's okay, bud.' I reassured him- although I wasn't sure if it would be.

Suddenly, something streaked across the clouds- and the lightning seemed to be following it.

It could be a Skrill. Too bad Fishlegs wasn't awake to confirm it.

The-dragon-that-could-have-been-a-Skrill swooped down from the clouds, close enough that we could see it; it was indeed a Skrill, but oddly, it didn't seem to be acting aggressive, as a wild dragon, and as a Strike Class dragon, should. In fact, it seemed almost \_friendly\_.

Suddenly, the Skrill landed on the beach, which made Toothless growl fiercely, protectively.

The Skrill went up to Toothless, and made small, soothing noises, almost as if he was telling him that he was a friend.

This worked, as Toothless relaxed, and purred, in acceptance of the dragon, which rode on lightning.

Now that he had Toothless pacified, the Skrill went over to me. I held my hand up, palm outstretched, showing the dragon that I was a friend, just as he had shown Toothless that he was, too.

'Greetings, dragon rider,' the Skrill said, and accepted my hand.

'W-what?! You can talk? To me? I'm not surprised that you could talk to Toothless, but to me...'

'Do not be surprised, dragon rider. Your dragon, my Brother of Lightning, is as close as he could get to speaking Norse without actually doing so.'

I thought about that. It did make sense, actually.

'Technically, he could talk if he wished, but he has no need to. You are both so synchronised, so entwined in your bond, that, as I have said before, he has no reason to communicate to you with speech. You do not need to, either.'

'But... how do you know this? And why are you talking to me now, if you don't need to?'

'In answer to your first question, I know this, because I live with a Brother of Clouds, and his mistress.'

'W-wait. So there are other dragon riders? Besides my friends, I mean.'

'Yes, there are other dragon riders, besides the ones who are sleeping, whom you call your friends. The Brother of Clouds' mistress looks rather like you. Perhaps you are related.'

'No, no, she couldn't be. My mother is dead.'

There was a twinkle in the Skrill's eye as I said this.

'Believe what you will, dragon rider. Anyway, in answer to your second question, I am only speaking to you now, because you do not understand me well enough yet for us to communicate without doing so. You may be able to do so with your own dragon, but you will only be able to understand me without speaking as our bond strengthens. Every single dragon, even ones that are the same species as my Brother of Lightning, has its own language, its own variety of calls, and sounds. To learn the language of a new species is quite difficult. But you and my Brother of Lightning appear to have mastered it very quickly. This is due to the fact that my Brother, and his species, are the most intelligent dragons. The time that this is mastered in also depends on how much of a gift the dragon rider has with his mount.

'With me, you are lucky. For I am of the same Class as my Brother, although not the same species, but this similarity alone should make it slightly easier for you to learn my language. This will be important on our journey.'

'W-w-wait, what?!' I repeated. This was too much to take in. 'Our journey'...? I'm already on a journey! To find my friends' dragons, and save them!' I protested.

'Ah, yes... the one who stole them; he is known as the Dragon Thief to you, is he not?'

'Yes!'

'Let me tell you something, dragon rider. The Dragon Thief is not who you think he is. The Dragon Thief whom you call so, is good. He has thought of a plan to bring back your dragons to you.'

'\_What?! No, he hasn't! He stole them, so why is he bringing them back?!'

'Let me explain it, from the beginning, dragon rider.' the Skrill said calmly.

'This all started, did it not, when he stole your dragons from your Academy?'

'Yeah, it did!'

'Well, as you found out- because you will ask, I will tell you that I know what I am about to tell you because my Brother told me- once you had discovered that your dragons had gone, you saw a pool of blood next to the Dragon Thief's cell, correct?'

'\_Yeah\_!'

'You were able to deduce, that someone, other than the Dragon Thief, had entered the Academy the night before your discovery, and, because he was angry at The-One-Who-Is-Not-The-Dragon-Thief, he hit him around the head with something metal, which had sharp things attached to it. This was the reason for the pool of blood. And this someone, took The-One-Who-Is-Not-The-Dragon-Thief, and your dragons. I must say, that is good detective work.' the Skrill smiled.

'Thanks.' I said, repeating his expression.

Then his face turned serious again.

'But there is more. This someone, is the Dragon Thief- the real one. He has been fighting The Brother of Clouds' mistress for a long time, for she has been undoing his dragon-traps, releasing the dragons inside.'

'And what would the Dragon Thief use the trapped dragons \_for\_?' I asked.

'H-he would have used the dragons in his dragon army, had The Brother of Clouds' mistress not saved them.'

'And where does she take the saved dragons?'

'She takes them to where I live- what is known as the Dragon Sanctuary. We all, including her, live under the command of The Great Bewilderbeast, or The King, or The Alpha.'

Suddenly, the terrible truth hit me.

'Wait, if this Sanctuary is full of dragons that have been saved from the Dragon Thief's traps, and you live there... does that mean that \_you\_ were a trapped dragon once, Skrill?'

A look of sadness came into the lightning dragon's eyes, a sadness so great and terrible, that I could imagine that he didn't want to think about it, ever again.

'Please don't just call me 'Skrill', dragon rider.' he said, doing anything to avoid talking about the subject that brought him such sadness. 'I prefer to be called Qomorah, for that is my name.'

'Okay.' I agreed. 'And I would prefer it if you didn't just call me 'dragon rider', but Hiccup, for that is my name.' I smiled, imitating Qomorah's strange way of speaking.

He smiled back. 'Understood, dragon rider- excuse me...  
\_Hiccup\_.'

But after that brief moment of happiness, the sadness entered his eyes again.

'You know, Qomorah, you don't have to talk about being in the dragon-trap if you don't want to.' I told him, concerned.

'No, I must. I have been keeping it locked up inside me for too long. It is making me too sad. I have to tell you; that will make me feel better. I believe it is something that you humans call, "getting it off your chest".'

'Yes, that's right. Are you sure that you want to tell me?'

'Yes. I will begin...'

'I was flying in a storm, the thunder and lightning booming and crashing around me, going back to my den. Then, suddenly, I was being torn from the sky. I screeched and screamed in terror and anger, for dragons, especially Strike Class ones, are creatures of the sky, and to be torn from it is the worst thing imaginable; this is one of the reasons why thinking about what happened makes me feel so terribly sad. I hit the ground, the impact knocking me out, and in my last moments of consciousness, I heard several 'click' sounds, signalling that the manacles, which had sensed my impact, would now bind my neck, legs, and wings. I stayed unconscious for as long as I could, for I saw no point in waking up- ever.

'I was awoken by excited shouts. The trappers that had found me were so excited because, to my knowledge, there were, and are, no Night Furies but my Brother alive at that time, and I was seen as the next best thing, as my species is in the same Class as my Brother's, as I have said before.

I pretended to be as weak and helpless as a newborn hatchling, as the leader of the trappers got as close as he dared to me, which was too close for my liking, smiling.

Now it was time to activate my plan. I called to the lightning, from the place which I had been torn from, and it answered. It struck the dragon trap, and as I was hoping, freed me. But there were prices to pay, for both the leader of the trappers, and me.

As the trapper was so close to the trap, the lightning electrocuted him- and killed him. But I was the one actually in the trap, so it was much worse for me. Luckily, dragons of my species have evolved to survive being struck by lightning- but if it was a big strike, as it was for me, they would only just survive it, with terrible

wounds.'

Qomorah revealed the terrible burns and scars which covered him underneath his wings, and everywhere else on his body.

Toothless purred pityingly, and went over to gently lick his new friend's wounds.

'Thank you, Brother of Lightning.' Qomorah said gratefully.

The Night Fury nuzzled the Skrill affectionately, as if he was saying, 'You're welcome'. Then he curled up next to me.

'Toothless has been in sort of the same situation before, haven't you, bud?' I asked him, stroking him.

Toothless purred, as if to say, 'Yes'.

'Really?' Qomorah asked. 'Now, I guess it's your turn to tell me a story now.'

### 30. Author's Note

**\*\*Author's Note\*\*\*\***

>As of tomorrow, I'll have not updated this fanfic for two whole months. I think it's time I told you guys my explanation for that.<strong>

**\*\*Basically, I've been busy- and I'm sure all of you have too- with Christmas and everything, but because I didn't have time to work on this fanfic then, when I \*\*\*\*\_did\_ have time, I just kind of felt like I couldn't be bothered. --\*\***

**\*\*Actually, about not having time to work on this fanfic- I don't really need to write anything new on it- as it's virtually finished, at least on my computer anyway- except a little bit to finish of the last chapter, I think. It's more a case of doing that and uploading the finished chapters to here and FanFiction.\*\***

**\*\*I wanted to at least write \_something\_, so I focused on starting a couple of new fanfics- one HTTYD one and two \_Chronicles of Ancient Darkness\_ ones- they're still on my laptop, though.\*\***

**\*\*I don't know when I could reach a point in those to post the finished chapters of this fanfic- I think finishing their current chapters would be good.\*\***

**\*\*So, at least you know the wait won't be long- although I'm considering this story officially on hiatus.\*\***

**\*\*(Speaking of hiatus, it's been so long since I've updated Fireproof that I've actually forgotten what's happening... \*\*\*\*:\$ :/ :P I guess you could say it's a form of writer's block... :P Could you guys give me some ideas of what could happen next- in a PM, preferably-?)\*\***

### 31. Stories - Part Two: Hiccup's Story

**\*\*Hey guys! :D I'm continuing with this fanfic now! Here's the next chapter! :)\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>'Okay. Well, one night, I shot Toothless down, and the next day, I found him in the woods, wounded, and covered in scars. He'd lost one of his tailfins, and when I set him free, he roared in my face. I kept on coming back to see him, and eventually, he trusted me enough to let me touch him. I made him a new tailfin, and we went out on our first test flight together... yeah, that went kind of wrong...<p>

'Then, my friend Astrid- she's the girl sleeping down there- discovered Toothless, and we sort of kidnapped her... and then we discovered the Dragons' Nest together...'

'Ah, yes, I have heard of that nest. Carry on.' Qomorah interjected.

'And then the next day, I had my Dragon Training final exam, with a Monstrous Nightmare, the same one that the Dragon Thief's stolen... that went wrong, too... Toothless came in to save me, and he got captured. My dad disowned me as his son for being friends with a dragon, and he and the other Vikings, along with Toothless, went to find the Dragons' Nest...'

'And they did this because all dragons instinctively obey the call of their Alpha from the nest.' Qomorah finished.

'Yeah, well it turned out that the Vikings got to see this 'Alpha', and me, Astrid, and Toothless did too, when we went to the Nest. It ate a Gronckle-'

'\_It ate a dragon from its own nest?!' Qomorah exclaimed. 'Alphas are meant to provide food for the dragons in their nest, not eat them!'

'Yeah, I guessed that that wasn't normal.' I said, with a hint of sarcasm.

'Anyway, my dad and his best friend were about to be barbecued by the Alpha, which I prefer to call the Red Death, and we flew in on the dragons from Dragon Training... the ones which have also been stolen, and we saved them. My friends tried to fight the Red Death, while I freed Toothless from his chains, and muzzle, which had kept him trapped on the ship. Snotlout- who's the one sleeping down there, helped Fishlegs- who's also sleeping down there- confuse the Red Death by banging their weapons on their shields. This also confused the dragons, and the Monstrous Nightmare that Snotlout was riding accidentally threw Snotlout from his back, and he landed on the Red Death. Fishlegs's Gronckle also got confused too, and landed on the ground- and squashed Fishlegs. He was okay though, and Snotlout started to hit the hammer, which Fishlegs had tossed him, into the Red Death's eyes. This made it roar in pain and anger, and throw Snotlout onto one of the spines on its head, which he just managed to grab hold of.

'The Red Death's tail swung around, and crashed into the mast of the ship that I was trying to free Toothless on. It landed on the deck,



and then, so did the Red Death's foot, which sunk the ship, and sent me and Toothless into the water. I swum down to where he'd sunk to, to try and free him, and I would have drowned, if it wasn't for my dad, who dragged me out of the water, and put me on a rock.

'I woke up, coughing water out of my lungs, to see my dad dive back into the water, to free Toothless. They exploded out of the water, Toothless carrying him in his claws, and then he released my dad, and leapt onto a rock, and roared at me; it sounded as if he was saying, 'Come on'.

'I jumped onto him, and started to attach the harness on his saddle to my clothes, only to have my dad call my name, and grab me by the arm. He apologised for disowning me, and said that he was proud to call me his son. I thanked him, and he stood aside, to let me and Toothless fly up, into the air.

'Astrid was flying past the Red Death's mouth, and the huge dragon opened it, sucking Astrid and her Deadly Nadder into it. Toothless streaked across the sky to save her, a black dot. The Vikings put their shields up over their heads, and yelled, "\_NIGHT FURY\_!" My dad's best friend finished the sentence that had been said for three hundred years, whenever a Night Fury was streaking across the sky, like Toothless- in fact, it might have actually been Toothless who had dive-bombed those watchtowers during the raids that happened in our village- at least, that's what he'd been doing before I shot him down- "\_GET DOWN\_!"

'With one blast of his purple fire, just in time, Toothless shot the Red Death, making its mouth close, sending both dragon and rider plummeting down through the sky.

'We would not let them fall to their deaths, though, as gravity desired. Toothless grabbed Astrid in his claws, just as he had done to my dad, and I asked him if he'd got her.

'In answer, Toothless stuck his face into Astrid's view, upside-down, and warbled.

'Then, he dropped her onto the ground, and we flew up, up, as high as we could, so that Astrid was no more than a tiny speck, and we were to her, but we still checked to see if she was okay.

'I pulled Toothless into a dive, and this time, we flew down, rather than up, and the Night Fury unleashed yet another blast of purple fire at the Red Death.

'It roared in pain and anger once again, and laid down, smoke and fire from the explosion clearing from its body, causing the Vikings to cough.

'Suddenly, one of its huge, monstrous wings rose up, pebbles from the beach cascading from it. The dragon was not dead after all.

'To prove this, I shouted, "You think that did it?", but I didn't get a reply. I wasn't expecting one, from the Vikings at least.

'The only "reply" I got, was the Red Death's roar, signalling that it was about to give chase. Well, at least it had warned us- but it also meant something else.

"Well, he can fly," I said to Toothless as we swooped down, amongst the pinnacles of rock, which we tried to avoid.

We also tried to avoid the Red Death's jaws, which just missed us as we swerved around a pinnacle. The Red Death didn't need to avoid the pinnacles, though; it just ploughed through them, as it demonstrated to us.

We flew past the Vikings, who shouted out encouragement. The Red Death slightly spoiled this moment by ploughing through a pinnacle of rock again.

As the Red Death caught up with us, yet again ploughing through another pinnacle, I pulled on Toothless's saddle to get him to go up. Doing this made me look at the stormy sky, as grey as the scales of the monster that was chasing us- and would catch us, if I didn't do the plan which I had just thought of.

"Okay, Toothless. Time to disappear." I pressed his saddle stirrup with my foot, to spread out his prosthetic tailfin, and to activate it for flying. "\_Come on\_, \_bud\_!" I shouted as we flew upwards, the gasps of amazement from the watching Vikings filling our ears, just as much as the howling wind.

The Red Death followed us upwards too, and we had to dodge its jaws once again.

But now the dragon was going to do something which we had not seen it do before.

I saw the flammable green gases building up in its throat, before the inferno which I knew would happen, just as they had built up when Toothless was about to blast my dad to Valhalla in the Dragon Training ring.

"\_Here it comes\_!" I shouted, and moved Toothless out of the way to dodge the fire, and as we flew upwards, away from said fire, we had the Red Death to avoid.

We flew through a thick layer of cloud, which was perfect for Toothless to disappear into. The Red Death's jaws crunched on nothing but air, just as he did so.

It hovered there, roaring in confusion, and looking around, into the ashy sky, which it guessed, didn't contain us, and roared three more times.

The Red Death was proven wrong when it was hit by a blast of purple fire, making it roar in pain, anger, and confusion.

Six more times Toothless and I repeated this, until the Red Death grew so enraged that the gases began to build up in its mouth again, and the fire started to scream around the sky, omni-directional.

"Watch out!" I warned, as Toothless and I flew as fast as we could to escape the flames, but we could not; a spark caught Toothless's tailfin, quickly spreading to the entire prosthetic.

Looking at it in terror, I said, "Okay, time's up. Let's see if this works."

Toothless plummeted down, upside down, fire and smoke trailing from his tailfin, roaring, as we dodged the Red Death's wing, and flew up to the dragon's face.

"Come on! That the best you can do?" I taunted, as we were doing so.

Toothless roared, in a way that sounded much like what I was saying.

The Red Death's eyes widened, not in surprise of this insult, but of how we had managed to get so close to its face.

As we flew up to its jaws, they clamped shut- although yet again, not containing us.

Actually, we were luring the Red Death downwards, Toothless roaring as we streaked past the dragon. It roared in rage.

Once it was close enough, I slowed Toothless down, so that the Red Death was flying behind us, so close that it could have bitten off Toothless's already burning tailfin, and that would be the end.

"Stay with me, buddy, we're good. Just a little bit longer." I pleaded to my terrified dragon.

He did what I said, and we plummeted down further, the Red Death following behind.

When we were just in front of its nose, it narrowed its eyes.

"Hold, Toothless." I told him.

Once again, the flammable gases built up in its throat, and started to billow out of it.

I closed my eyes, and tensed as it did so, waiting for the right moment.

And I had found it.

"\_NOW\_!" I ordered, and immediately, Toothless released yet another blast of purple fire, which exploded in the Red Death's mouth.

It roared in surprise, and its eyes widened, unable to believe that we were about to make it explode.

Massive holes were ripped in its wings, from the pressure of the explosion that was about to happen inside it, and I pulled Toothless out of the way, so that we did not die with it.

The Red Death finally hit the ground and exploded, causing the Vikings to cover their ears.

The flames of the Red Death's destruction were catching up with us as we flew amongst its dead body. Frantically, I pushed the stirrup on

Toothless's tailfin, but it snapped off, to join the Red Death in destruction.

I was too busy watching it fall, to notice, too late, the Red Death's clubbed tail.

"No." I begged. Toothless made a small noise, which seemed like he was saying the same thing.

But the tail moved even closer into view; there was no escaping it now.

"\_No\_!" I shouted, which was the last thing I said, apart from a shout of pain at the impact, before Toothless crashed into the tail, sending us both plummeting into the inferno.

Even though he was skidding through the air, out of control, Toothless still managed to roar in terror and concern at me, and to plunge through the fire, to save me.

## 32. Stories - Part Three: Drago's Story

I stared sadly at my metal leg.

Qomorah came and sat beside it, sniffing it curiously.

'So you lost this killing the Alpha?' he asked.

'Yep.'

'Oh... that was very brave of you.' he complimented.

'Thanks, Qomorah.'

We were silent for a while, and the Skrill looked as if he wanted to say something, but didn't. So I asked something instead.

'What... happens to the dragons that \_don\_'\_t\_ get saved?' I asked, trying to word it in a better and kinder way than, 'What happens to the dragons that join the Dragon Thief's army?'

'This is a thing that I don't wish to discuss. But, since you are my master, I have to obey you, and so I will tell you.'

Anger came into that Skrill's eyes, a fire, as he told me the following.

'The best way I can, or wish to, describe it, is that they are puppets. Bended to the will of the Dragon Thief, until they are broken. That is all I know, as no dragon has ever returned from the army, once it was captured.'

'But... how does he do that...? How \_can\_ he do that...?'

'He has many things to make him do it. Hatred that is so strong- because he lost his family, and his village to dragons, when he was about your age- that he can break dragons through the force of it.'

'Wait... he lost his entire family and village to dragons?!' I gasped. This was unbelievable to me; the dragons in Berk had only burned down a \_few\_ houses, killed a \_few\_ people.

'Yes.'

'But... why?'

'At the time when he was born, there was something known as the Dragon Rebellion. Their leader was the Dragon Furious, and he had sworn himself to exterminating anyone who could be a threat to him, or dragons as a whole.

'When he heard news that a boy was born, he looked into the future, and saw that the boy had a gift with dragons... a way with them.'

'Like me!' I exclaimed.

'Yes.' Qomorah's expression turned grave. 'But his gift would not be good, like yours. It would be evil. And Furious knew that if the boy was allowed to grow up, he could use his gift to cause the extinction of the dragons. He, obviously, could not allow that to happen. So, he had to kill the boy, and his family. But he decided that he would exterminate them on the boy's fifteenth birthday, or otherwise, in his opinion, it would be unfair, and he did not want it to be so.

'The extermination happened the night of the boy's birthday. Earlier that day, his father had given him a staff as a present. And that, was the worst mistake of his life.'

'Why?'

'I will get to that.' he said calmly.

'The boy's family had been killed, the village had burned down- the boy had even lost his arm-'

A terrible, and chilling, realisation came over me.

'But... I've lost my leg. And he lost his arm... we've both lost limbs... \_I\_'\_m like him\_...' I said shakily.

'You are alike and unlike each other in different ways, Hiccup. You are unlike him in more ways than you are like him, which is good. Very good. But please, let me continue with the story.

'-But the boy still survived, and was walking away from his village- with a new arm. Furious discovered that the boy had escaped, and was, well, furious.

'When the boy was in sight, he ordered his dragons to kill him- but they could not- because the boy had discovered something.

'An egg. Furious's son's egg, hidden in a place so concealed that Furious did not think that he could have found it; he thought that the boy would be too busy grieving and crying over how he had lost everything, to even leave his destroyed village.

'But Furious was wrong. The boy did not do that. He was a determinator; he was strong, like his father.'

'My dad says that too...' I cut in.

'It is good that your father says that, for you are.'

'After that terrible day, after so many terrible things that had happened, some of them which I have not even told you of yet, he made a vow. A vow that he would rise above the fear of dragons. And make it so that nobody would ever have to live in fear, like he had, ever again.'

'And what happened to that vow?' I asked.

'He had every intention of keeping it, and he did... sort of. He came to many villages of neighbouring tribes, telling them that he alone could control the dragons, and he alone could keep the villagers safe. If... they chose to bow down and follow him.'

'They did. What choice did they have? Even though I hate the Dragon Thief, if I was as ignorant and stupid as those villagers, I would have joined him, gladly. He is cunning, and manipulative, like that.'

'What do you mean, "What choice did they have"?''

'Well, they could join him, or they could be promptly barbecued by his dragons.'

'Oh.' I replied, not quite expecting the alternative.

'Anyway, once they had joined him, some of them became dragon-trappers, some of them soldiers.'

'Wait- dragon-trappers?'

'Yes. The-One-Who-Is-Not-The-Dragon-Thief, Eret, Son of Eret-'

'His dad named his son after himself?!' I spluttered.

'Yes, he did. He is- or should I say 'was'- a dragon-trapper.'

'So he's the guy that we locked up?'

'Yes. And the Dragon Thief punished him, for "running away", and "stealing and selling his dragons to them".

'By "them", did he mean us, the Berkians?'

'Yes.'

'And how do you know that he said all this?'

'Well... I happened to overhear it, as I was... flying past...' Qomorah admitted sheepishly.

I didn't really believe him, but even so, I gave him the benefit of the doubt.

'How did the Dragon Thief punish him?'

'Well, first I think I had better tell you this story.'

\* \* \*

><p><strong>That bit when Qo said he happened to overhear Drago talking to Eret... All I'll say is that it could be foreshadowing...<strong>

### 33. Stories - Part Four: Valka's Story

A while after the Brother of Clouds and his mistress had been at the Dragon Sanctuary, their bond had been progressing, so they decided to go out on a night flight, with the Great Bewilderbeast's permission. It was granted, as so they flew out.

'During the flight, they discovered a dragon-trapper's fort, which currently had Eret, and the leader of the trappers, as well as many other trappers, on it. They went back to the Great Bewilderbeast, and the Sanctuary, and told him of their discovery. He gathered the other dragons of the Sanctuary, and they flew to the fort.'

'And I'm guessing that you know this because you were one of the dragons of the Sanctuary, and you were also told of the discovery, and the reason you know the rest is because you were actually there?' I asked him.

'Correct.'

'When they reached the fort, The Brother of Clouds' mistress separated her dragon from the group to free a Monstrous Nightmare, caught in a trap on the beach.

'But while she was undoing the trap, the dragons of the Sanctuary had dart-bolases fired on them by the trappers of the fort, and they were incapacitated. I was one of them.

'The Brother of Clouds' mistress managed to free the trapped dragon, but it did not fly away, and she was captured herself, by the trappers, and her dragon was incapacitated, too. She placed her hand on the Monstrous Nightmare's snout, in an attempt to "show" the leader of the trappers-'

'That's exactly what I said to Astrid when Toothless and I kidnapped her.'

The familiar twinkle was back in Qomorah's eye again.

'You say the same things as her, Hiccup.'

'I know.'

He nodded, and continued with the story.

'But the leader was not having it. He whacked her hand away from the Nightmare's snout, hitting it, and screaming at it.

'The Nightmare's pupils turned to slits, and he started to chase the

leader in fury; I'm sure that that wasn't what he wanted it to do.'  
he smiled.

'I guess not.'

'It turned out that the leader of the trappers, wasn't actually the leader at all. He was actually Eret.'

'This guy turns out not to be a lot of things, doesn't he?'

'Yes.' Qomorah laughed.

'The actual leader, whose name was Ziist, appeared, and ran to save his fellow trapper. But the Nightmare swatted him aside with its claws, as if he were nothing.'

'Ouch.'

'Yes, indeed. Eret himself was fine though.'

'The Brother of Clouds woke up, and this distracted the Nightmare from noticing that Eret was fine. The Brother of Clouds and the Nightmare were old friends.'

'Really? What happened?' I asked.

If it's possible for dragons to look uncomfortable, Qomorah achieved this.

'And another question I've been wanting to ask: if this Dragon Rebellion thing killed the Dragon Thief's family, and tried to kill him, why didn't they kill me? I mean, we both have the same way with dragons, and Furious thought that dragon-tamers might be a threat to dragons.'

'Ah, well, you see, Hiccup, Furious looked into the future, and saw that the Dragon Thief would use his gift for evil.'

'And he knew that I wouldn't?'

'Yes. Well, so far you seem to be.'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean...'

He sighed.

'I mean, if you happen to get captured by the Dragon Thief, just be careful. You might end up like those villagers... and that cannot happen, for if it does...'

He seemed as if he wanted to say more, but instead, let the sentence trail off, and eventually finished with:

'You are our only hope, Hiccup.'

Then, as if he wanted to change the subject of the prospect of me being captured by the Dragon Thief, he said, 'So, you wanted to know about how The Brother of Clouds and the Nightmare became



friends?'

'Yes.' I replied.

'Well, that is good, for that is why I told you about why Furious would not, and will not, kill you.

It all started when The Brother of Clouds was flying past a certain dragons' nest. You may have heard of it.'

'\_THE\_ Dragons' Nest?' I asked.

'Yes. Anyway, he happened to get caught in a raiding swarm-'

'Just like Astrid and I!'

'-yes, and a Nightmare flew up to him, demanding what he was doing flying in their raiding swarm. They made a... \_deal\_, and the Nightmare agreed to it. On one condition.'

'And what was that condition?' I asked nervously, sure that whatever it was, it wouldn't be good.

'To capture you- The Master of Dragons.'

'Wait- The Master of Dragons? So I was known as a dragon-tamer before I even knew I was myself?'

'Yes, Hiccup. Even I was aware of your gift before you discovered it yourself. That is partly why I came here.

'You see, there is what is known as The Great Prophecy, which tells of a young Viking boy who will befriend a dragon- a Night Fury.'

'Me!'

'Yes, you, Hiccup. And the Queen of the Nest which the Nightmare lived in- the one which you killed- did not believe in the Prophecy. Why would she? It told of her death.

'But, eventually, as prophecies do- sometimes- it came true, as you know.'

'Yeah, I do.'

'Why did The Brother of Clouds and the Nightmare want to capture me?' I asked.

'Well... The Brother of Clouds did not always have a mistress. Once, he had a master- The Dragon Thief.'

'Really?!'

'Yes. The Brother of Clouds was going to bring you to him- but something happened which prevented that... something which caused you to still be here- and not brainwashed by the Dragon Thief, like those villagers were- but also for someone else to leave.'

'My mother!'

'Yes, Hiccup, your mother-'

'Where is she?!' I demanded.

'I will tell you later.'

'Why? I need to know now!' I demanded.

'I said, I will tell you later.' There was now perhaps the faintest suggestion of a growl in Qomorah's voice.

I didn't really much want to get struck by lightning again (and maybe lose the other leg this time), so I didn't demand further.

Qomorah snorted in annoyance, then asked, 'Would you like me to continue with the main story?'

'Yep.'

'The Brother of Clouds and the Nightmare began to circle each other, preparing to fight.'

'Why? I thought you said they were friends!'

'They were- but the Nightmare was not in his right mind. He was being controlled, by a Bewilderbeast- the same species that protects my Nest. My King can control us too, but he does not. He sees no need to. He is a good Bewilderbeast, a good King. The other Bewilderbeast, however...'

'Isn't.' I finished.

'No. It is not. If The Brother of Clouds listened hard enough, he could hear the Bewilderbeast, which was inside the Nightmare's thoughts. The huge dragon was telling the Nightmare to "bring the traitor to him". By "the traitor", he meant The Brother of Clouds.

'The Nightmare protested, saying that The Brother of Clouds was too strong. So, the Bewilderbeast entered The Brother of Clouds' thoughts too, telling him to give up, because he was his Alpha now.

'The Brother of Clouds refused to give in to the Bewilderbeast once again, as he had when the Dragon Thief became his master. He tried to block out the Bewilderbeast's thoughts, to speak to the Nightmare, telling him that he could be free from the Queen, from the Alpha, from any of those that tried to control him, if he just joined them. He said that his Alpha was a good King, and the Bewilderbeast, hearing this, asked him, in disbelief, if he did indeed have a King.

'The Brother of Clouds said yes, he did have a king, and that the Bewilderbeast could meet him if he wished. As it happened, the King was preparing to launch his surprise attack at that moment.

'The Bewilderbeast claimed that he would crush The Brother of Cloud's pathetic King, gore him with his tusks.

'The Brother of Clouds asked his mistress to call the Alpha, and she

did so, telling the trappers to run. They all did, except for one.

'Eret, who was sitting next to the body of a fellow trapper. Said trapper's body had blood running down his face, and the Bewilderbeast said that if he had a heart, he might have found this touching; but his master had broken his, long ago.

'The Brother of Clouds accused the Bewilderbeast of killing Ziist, but the dragon only said that the Nightmare had.

'At this, The Brother of Clouds was prepared to fight the Nightmare again, snarling at him. But he was stopped by a calmer, kinder voice; his Alpha's, who said to not murder the Nightmare out of anger; that would make him no better than him.

'The sound of his Alpha's voice calmed The Brother of Clouds enough to obey his command.

'However, the other Bewilderbeast had been listening to The Brother of Clouds' thoughts, and was astounded that there was another Bewilderbeast after all. It roared in fury, and told the Nightmare to follow it, which it did.

'The Brother of Clouds felt the same urge to follow the Bewilderbeast, but once again, his Alpha prevented him from doing something bad. He turned his mighty head towards the trappers' fort, and inhaled, preparing to blast it with ice.'

'With ice?'

'Yes, with ice. Bewilderbeasts do not breathe fire like other dragons.'

'That's... \_incredible\_.'

'It is indeed, Hiccup.

'But the Alpha had forgotten that Eret was still beside the body of Ziist, right in the firing line of the ice. The trapper took off Ziist's metal Stormcutter disc-'

'What's a Stormcutter?'

'It is The Brother of Cloud's species.

'-at least now he would have something to remember his fellow trapper by.

'Then my Alpha blasted Ziist out of the world, into another, even colder than my Alpha's ice.'

'Helhiem.' I recalled.

Qomorah seemed to express some sort of grim satisfaction at this, which I was surprised at; this was unlike him. Then again, I'd only just met him, so I'd still need to get to know him properly.

'Eret's world faded into freezing, cold white, too.

'By the time my Alpha realised what he'd done, it was too late. The Brother of Cloud's mistress was furious with him, but her dragon walked up to her, and his presence calmed her. He told her that it was his fault, because he asked her to call the Alpha. They decided that the least they could do was give Ziist a proper burial. Not of fire, but of ice.

'The Brother of Clouds sniffed the air, and suddenly, his pupils turned to slits. He could smell bad dragons, and ships, and said that they'd better hurry up with the burial.

'The King inhaled, once again, and covered Ziist's body with a thick layer of ice.

'The Brother of Clouds' mistress saw, beside the block of ice which was now Ziist's body, the unconscious form of Eret. She asked my Alpha what was going to happen to him, and he said that he would have a lot of explaining to do to his boss, the Dragon Thief, for the destroyed fort, Ziist's death, and his lack of dragons.

'The Brother of Clouds told them that the smell, of bad dragons, and ships, was getting stronger, so they left; the incapacitated dragons waking up at my Alpha's call, and The Brother of Clouds' mistress climbing onto her dragon as he started to fly, too, back to the Sanctuary.'

'When Eret woke up, he saw Ziist's frozen body, and the lack of incapacitated dragons on the beach. He heard the Dragon Thief's ship approaching, and ran across the beach, to a cave, where he hid.

'He had found the cave just in time, for almost immediately after, he heard the Dragon Thief's footsteps, which stopped when he got to Ziist's body.

'A soldier next to the Dragon Thief asked his boss why they couldn't just leave Eret.

'In answer, the Dragon Thief told the soldier to go over to some nearby dragons. The soldier placed his foot onto one of the dragon's snouts as he was ordered- but he did not notice the cruel smile of evil intent that was on his boss's face.

'The Dragon Thief went over to the sea, and waited. Eventually, his Bewilderbeast came out- it was the same one that had controlled the Nightmare.

The soldier definitely noticed this. The Dragon Thief pointed his staff at the dragons, and immediately, their pupils snapped to slits, just as the Nightmare's had.

'The soldier just managed to remove his foot from the dragon's snout, before its jaws snapped onto the limb. He started to back away, pleading frantically to the dragons, who were advancing menacingly towards him, and to the Dragon Thief.

'His pleads were met in vain, and eventually, the soldier ran- which was the worst thing he could have done. The dragons ripped him apart.'

'Harsh.' I said.

'Yes, it would appear so. There was nothing but a pile of bones left of the soldier, and while he had been alive, he had apologized for questioning the Dragon Thief. So, the Dragon Thief sneered, 'Apology accepted', to the pile of bones.

'He then raised his head to the sky, and asked the gods to tell the soldier that he had just said that.

'Eret thought that the Dragon Thief had just become crazier than he already was, trying to speak to the gods, and said so, out loud.

'The Dragon Thief had better hearing than Eret thought, and started looking around furiously, screaming at him to tell him where he was.

'Eret told him, in delighted glee, even showing his face; which only served to enrage the Dragon Thief further. He made a sound- something between a growl, and a scream, strangled in fury, which was actually an accidental Monstrous Nightmare call.

'The Nightmare, which was in the group of dragons which had killed the soldier, flew away, much to the rage of the Dragon Thief, and he commanded Eret to go after it- and somehow, he ended up at Berk. But you already know this, so now I can tell you how the Dragon Thief punished Eret.'

'Please do,' I smiled.

'Very well.

'Eret failed in capturing the Nightmare... I am presuming you heard a scream of pain, followed by a crash of lightning, at some point?'

'Yeah, I did, actually.'

'That was probably the sound of the Dragon Thief punishing Eret. I do not know how he has punished him, but, as I have just told you, I know why.'

'Oh. Speaking of the Dragon Thief, why don't you finish telling me that other story of how he lost his family, and his village?'

'I shall, then, Hiccup.' Qomorah replied.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>'The Great Prophecy'... How clichÃ©... But I had to do it. :\*\*

#### 34. Stories: Part Five: Drago's Story: Cont

\*\*'\*\*\*When he saw that the boy had found his son's egg, Furious swooped down, claws outstretched, prepared to finish what he had started.

'But the boy was prepared, too. He waited until Furious had got as

close as possible, and, using the hook of his father's staff, he cut a deep gash in the dragon's chest- which reopened a scar, both physically, and mentally, for Furious.

'He remembered the first time he had got that scar. From the bite of Grimbeard the Ghastly's sword, the Stormblade, when the Viking had killed his own son, Hiccup the Second, who was also Furious's master. Furious had swooped down, claws outstretched, much like he had done only moments before, ready to kill Grimbeard for murdering his master. The Viking pirate had gave him a gash in the chest with the Stormblade, much like the boy had done with his weapon.

'Both times, Furious was just trying to protect those who were important to him; master, and son.'

'Wow. I just hope Toothless would protect me, the current Hiccup!' I laughed. Toothless purred, as if to say, 'Yes, Master, I would protect you, and die for you if I had to.'

Qomorah laughed, and continued with the story.

'And also, Furious had failed, both times. It was this that made him call off the Rebellion.

And as for the boy, the egg had hatched, revealing a Bewilderbeast, the same species that I serve in the Dragon Sanctuary. He was cruel to it, abusing it, until, finally, the mighty dragon couldn't take it anymore. It snapped, and accepted the boy as its master.'

'And... then what happened?'

'I do not know. I have not seen the Bewilderbeast since then, but I am assuming that it is fully-grown by now.'

'Is that dragon automatically an Alpha, like the one that protects your Sanctuary?'

'No. There cannot be two Alphas. If that Bewilderbeast wished to become an Alpha, it would have to challenge the current one- to the death.'

'So, it's a bit like the grudge that Toothless had with the-' I lowered my voice, as I said this dragon's name, '\_Whispering Death\_...?'

Toothless snarled, and growled, at the mention of the dragon's name. But, even though I stroked Toothless gently, and said, 'It's okay, bud,' and Qomorah did the same- but in dragon-language, he wouldn't be calmed.

Suddenly, Qomorah's head snapped up, and he sniffed the air. Immediately, his body language was the same as Toothless's.

'It is not just the mention of the dragon's name that is angering him. He is sensing something; even before I did. I was too absorbed in telling you the boy's story to take regular sniffs of the air.'

'By the way,' I asked Qomorah, abandoning my previous question, 'what's the Dragon Thief's name...?'

'His name... is Drago Bludvist. And he is coming here, with his fleet of ships, to this island, right now. Wake the others. Now.'

I did as he said.

Toothless and I walked around each of their bearskin blankets. I shook their shoulders, and Toothless nudged them.

'What is it, Hiccup?' Astrid yawned.

'Look, all you need to know right now is, the Dragon Thief is coming to this island, with his fleet of ships, right now.'

She grabbed her axe, instantly awake and alert, and met the yawning protests of the others with this reply:

'Would you rather Hiccup woke you up, or a weapon to your throat, when they come to the island? Because I can do that right now.'

Predictably, none of them really fancied that, so they woke themselves up straight away.

I introduced them to the lightning dragon standing next to me on the beach.

'Guys, this is Qomorah. He'll be flying some of us to where the Dragon Thief's ships are, won't you?'

All of them gave a start of surprise when Qomorah opened his mouth, and said, 'Indeed, dragon riders.'

He pointed a wing at both of the ones he had chosen to fly there; Fishlegs and Snotlout, who both questioned how he knew their names.

He replied, with that familiar twinkle in his eye, 'Hiccup told me.'

\* \* \*

><p><strong>This is the final part of 'Stories'! :D<strong>

### 35. Author's Note (2)

\*\*Okay, so some of you may have noticed that I posted the next chapter of this fanfic for a split-second, and then took it down. This is because it was what can only be described as a mess in terms of text formatting. I have no idea what went wrong, but I will try to fix it.\*\*

### 36. Chapter 36

\*\*As you can see, the issue that I experienced in my A/N previously is gone now- hopefully! So no more text formatting issues!  
:D\*\*

**\*\*Now that that's done, I just want to make a little note.\*\***

**\*\*(With the exception of this chapter), all other chapters of this fanfic, and probably \_Feral \_as well, will likely not be paragraphed, given that BirdyTheBrave is still AWOL. :/ \*\***

**\*\*By the way, it's their birthday today! :D (No, I'm not a stalker. XD)\*\***

**\*\*Oh, and before I forget, I'd just like to ask you guys, what should I name this chapter? 'Chapter 36' sounds a little boring, if I'm honest. :/\*\***

**\*\*Without further ado, let's start the next chapter! :)\*\***

**\* \* \***

**><p><strong>Drago's POV<strong>**

**\* \* \***

**><p>Responding to my screams, my Bewilderbeast emerged out of the sea, waiting expectantly for a command.<p>**

I jumped from the side of my ship, onto the huge dragon's head, pointing my staff at the sea ahead- which, a little way above it, contained- DRAGON RIDERS?!

I snarled in fury.

'Uhhhhh... what is that...?' I gasped, as I saw something huge emerging out of the sea.

'That would be a dragon, Hiccup,' Fishlegs said helpfully.

'I know that... now.' I replied.

I saw a figure standing at the front of the ship leading the fleet, who jumped onto the dragon's head.

'Qomorah,' I said shakily, 'Is that dragon Drago's Bewilderbeast, and is that person Drago?'

'Yes, to both.' Qomorah replied, equally as terrified. 'Hiccup, I think it would be best if I took Fishlegs and Snotlout, and Astrid, down to the island, to join the other two dragon riders... to spectate, so to speak.'

'Sure, Qomorah. Do whatever you think is best.'

'Thank you, Hiccup.' Qomorah said, and did so.

He flew back, and started to go towards the clouds.

'What are you doing?!' I shouted.

'You'll see!' his fading voice replied.

'Well, looks like it's just you and me, bud,' I said, nervously stroking a snarling, slit-pupilled Toothless. 'I just really hope



that that Skrill has a really good plan.'

I swallowed hard, as the Bewilderbeast got closer.

Eventually, it got within talking distance.

'I'm proud of you, boy,' Drago sneered, 'because you're not running away, like the little runt of a coward I thought you were.'

He stopped laughing, and scowled, actually snarling with hate.

'But enough talking. Prepare to freeze, dragon-rider.'

He pointed his staff at me, and the huge dragon inhaled. Instead of seeing green flammable gases building up in its mouth, I could see ice-crystals.

'QOMORAH!' I screamed.

Immediately, the Skrill himself came screaming across the sky towards Drago and his Bewilderbeast.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Qomorah's POV<strong>

\* \* \*

><p>I called to the thunder and lightning above me as I screamed through the clouds, but they did not obey.<p>

I told myself not to worry; it would take a while for them to respond, just enough time for me to electrocute Drago's metal arm, which I was rapidly hurtling towards.

By now, I had almost reached Drago and his Bewilderbeast, and the thunder and lightning was not responding to my call.

I became aware of something wet sliding over my scales as I streaked down towards the sea.

I was so absorbed in my fury, my sight so fixed on Drago and his Bewilderbeast, that I did not notice the Scauldrons blasting my scales with seawater.

That was why the thunder and lightning was not responding to me.

Realising that all hope was lost, closer than ever to Drago and his Bewilderbeast- enough for said dragon to be able to breathe ice at me- I decided that I may as well go out with some last words.

'IF YOU WANT TO GET TO THEM, YOU WILL HAVE TO GO THROUGH ME!'

And then there was nothing but an icy cold hitting me, solidifying instantly, closing around me. I could feel my will to be the Alpha of Skrills freezing, too, slipping away, to the Bewilderbeast. I hit the rocks of the island, the ice around me not even shattering slightly.

Drago smiled, and pointed his staff at me. I heard the Bewilderbeast's voice inside my head.

I AM THE ALPHA OF SKRILLS NOW.

Suddenly, my eyesight started going misty red. No. No. My pupils were turning to slits. I felt angry, furious.

HICCUP IS NOT YOUR MASTER ANYMORE. MY MASTER IS.

Yes, yes, Alpha.

WHEN YOU AWAKE FROM YOUR ICY SLEEP, DESTROY THE DRAGON RIDERS.

Yes, Alpha. I will not fail you.

GOOD.

Then there was darkness.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Hiccup's POV<strong>

\* \* \*

><p>'No! NO! QOMORAH!' I screamed, flying Toothless over to the island in terror, and practically flinging myself off his back.<p>

I banged my fists uselessly against the ice.

'TOOTHLESS!' I called. He knew immediately what I wanted him to do, and purple fire started lighting in his mouth.

Drago chuckled.

'Even a Night Fury's fire cannot break through that ice. That is Bewilderbeast ice.'

'So there's no way to save him?!' I demanded.

'The Skrill is not dead. Its internal body temperature will keep it alive for a long time.'

Behind us, we both heard the sound of ice solidifying.

Drago looked over his shoulder to the sea- which was the thing that was solidifying.

Some of his Bewilderbeast's ice had hit the sea, freezing it.

He smiled, as if he had just thought of a plan, and prepared to leave- but not before saying this.

'You have not seen the last of me, dragon-riders- or my Skrill.'

Then he pointed his staff once again at the sea, the weight of the Bewilderbeast as he swam in it making some of the ice crack and break.

I heard him shouting, 'READY THE NADDERS!' to his fleet.

'Hiccup...?' Astrid asked nervously, still recovering from seeing Qomorah becoming frozen. 'Why's he shouting that...?'

'Astrid, I'm disappointed in you.' Fishlegs scolded teasingly. 'You know that Nadders have the hottest flame in the dragon world.'

'Yeah, I do.'

'So, he's going to use the Nadders to burn the ice.'

'But why would he do that?' I asked. 'All that would do is clear a path for us to sail on.'

'Maybe he wants us to do that... it could be a trap... or maybe he wants to clear a path for something else...' Astrid pondered.

Fishlegs responded by gulping.

'What do you mean by something else...? THE SCAULDRONS THAT CAUSED THE THUNDER AND LIGHTNING NOT TO RESPOND TO QOMORAH?! THUNDERDRUMS?! MAYBE EVEN A SECOND BEWILDERBEAST?!' he screamed in terror.

'No, Fishlegs, calm down. Think. Maybe he's not going to clear a path in the sea, but in the ice.' 'So you mean... like an ice bridge...?'

'Yeah. Leading to an island. Check your map. What's the nearest island east and west from here?'

'Well, Berk is west... but I don't know the name of the island that's east.'

'Hmmmmmm. Well, maybe it's not an important island if nobody's bothered to name it. But I think we should camp out on another unnamed island... just in case...'

'In case of what...?' Astrid asked.

'You're not going to do reasons again, are you?' Tuff moaned.

'Yes, Tuff, I am. One: Qomorah might unfreeze... and I don't like that look in his eye... or Drago, or somebody else might steal him... and either person definitely won't be friendly. Two: if it turns out that there is something on that island to the east, I don't want to be here when it comes... and I'm sure you guys don't either.'

'We do!' Ruff and Tuff shouted.

'So... you want to be torn apart by whatever dragon comes here from the island to the east...?' Fishlegs asked sarcastically.

'Yeah! At least we'll go to Valhalla- hey! HEY! PUT US DOWN!' they both screamed, as Astrid and I climbed onto Toothless's back, and he started to carry them off.

'I'll fly back to collect you guys, once I've found an island!' I shouted to Snotlout and Fishlegs, as we flew off.

'Okay, looks like we've found one.' I said, as I landed- but not before releasing Ruff and Tuff from Toothless's claws- and dismounted Toothless on an island that was far away from Qomorah.

'Stay here, guys.' I told Astrid, Ruff, and Tuff.

I climbed onto Toothless, and flew off.

As I was flying over the sea, I saw Drago's Nadders burning the ice, to create the ice bridge.

Silently, I thanked Thor that Stormfly was not with them.

The poor dragons; some of them had head spikes missing, and their faces and bodies were covered in scars. Also covering their faces was armour, the metal covered with scratches, and dried blood. I looked into the eyeholes of their armour, and I saw yellow eyes, burning with anger and misery.

I sighed sadly, and flew on.

I returned to Astrid, Ruff, and Tuff with Fishlegs sitting behind me on Toothless's back, and Snotlout hanging from his claws. I was happy to find that the three had already set up camp.

'Well done, guys!' I congratulated them.

'Pffft. All we did was set up camp.' Tuff retorted.

I ignored him, snuggling under my bearskin blanket, the others doing the same.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Captain Vorg's POV<strong>

\* \* \*

><p>'So, Dagur, why have you called this meeting?' I asked him, as I and the other Berserkers sat in the Great Hall.<p>

'I have called this meeting, because you are going to find a Skrill for me.'

'A-again? B-but Dagur, they're very rare; I don't think I'll be able to find one.'

'You will take a small amount of men, enough to fit on a ship, and find me a Skrill.' Dagur repeated, in a tone that suggested he had no patience for my protests.

I sighed, but quietly enough so that Dagur couldn't hear, and said, 'Okay, then, sir.'

'Good.' he replied.

I left the Hall, with four or so Berserkers following behind me.

In the dead of night, when all of the dragon riders were fast asleep, a ship, containing five Berserkers, the first of which is currently plotting the course of the ship, is sailing across the sea, making its way in between the ice, near the area where Qomorah was frozen.

Vorg takes out his spyglass, sees said Skrill imprisoned in the ice, and his eyes gleam.

He lands the ship on the island, and orders his men to tie ropes around the dragon.

It takes all five of their strength combined, but eventually, they haul the Skrill up on a platform connected to chains.

Vorg pulls the chains, and the platform goes up onto the deck of the ship.

There is just enough room for both the Berserkers and Qomorah on the ship.

Vorg plots the course back to the island of the Berserkers.

He does not notice the person who is watching them go.

Drago growls, half in anger, and half in amusement, from the deck of his ship.

He jumps down, silently, from his ship, onto a platform of ice.

Instinctively, he walks across it carefully, even though he is walking on Bewilderbeast ice, and he knows that it will not crack.

Eventually, reaching the island where the riders are sleeping, he takes some smoked sturgeons from his cloak, and places them around the tiny island.

His job done, secretly relieved that none of the riders have woken up, he returns to his ship.

-My red eyes open immediately; for I smell something... it smells like... our favourite food... smoked sturgeon! I dart to the entrance of the cave, summoning the rest of my pack with a roar.

They wake up, too, and join me at the entrance of the cave. Suddenly, I run off, following the smell of the fish, flanked by my pack.

-Drago smiles, as he watches the dragon riders run away from the Speed Stingers. They are no match for the small, flightless dragons.

The red, pointed stinger pierces the skin of every rider... except the one who is riding the Night Fury... for now.

The dragon's red tail is hit, by another red tail. Rider and dragon

begin to plummet downwards.

The rider is lying on the ground; he cannot get up, due to his prosthetic leg. The Night Fury attempts to help his master... but he does not see the attack from behind, which renders him paralysed.

With nobody left to protect him, the rider can only watch, as frozen as if he was paralysed already, as the leader of the Speed Stingers walks up, unhurriedly, to his-soon-to-be-victim, clicking in triumph, enjoying the rider's terror.

The red stinger dangles in front of his face... it makes contact with the skin...

And then he feels nothing.

Sucessful, the Stingers sniff the air suddenly, and dart off, across the other side of the ice bridge to the west, to which leads to an island, whose name makes Drago snarl in fury.

Berk.

However, he is not furious for long. He has no time for that.

Screaming, and swinging his staff around his head, he summons several dragons- with claws strong enough to pick up humans.

They do so, to the riders. Usually, they would be kicking and screaming, protesting against being carried off, but their paralysis prevents them from doing this.

They are dropped onto the deck of the ship, and Drago orders some of his men to... escort them, as he put it, to the cell next to Eret.

The dragons are sitting before their master, waiting for their next command.

Drago sends out the Nadders of the group to burn the ice-bridge, to leave no traces left.

He watches them do so, smiling at the sound of the distant screams of surprise and horror from the Berkians, as they are paralysed by the Speed Stingers.

Once the Nadders are finished, he locks up them, and the other dragons, back in their cages, and goes off to tell his men to ready the ships once again.

Only this time, they are getting his Skrill back.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>DUN DUN DUN! XD<strong>

\*\*"Prepare to freeze, dragon-rider." Yeah, I know it's a little cheesy, but I don't really care. XD I thought it sounded epic at the same time.\*\*

**\*\*Hopefully you can also notice that this chapter was somewhat based on A View To A Skrill... or at least, how Qo became frozen.\*\***

**\*\*I'm a little out of the loop in regards to what's going on in this story at the moment (:O), so correct me if I'm wrong, but... as I wrote it, it appears that Drago knows that Speed Stingers can swim as a result of evolution.\*\***

**\*\*I still find it \_fascinating\_ that dragons can evolve, though.\*\***

**\*\*And on that note, bye! :D\*\***

### 37. Chapter 37

**\*\*Hi again, guys! :D Sorry that I've been so long getting this chapter out!\*\***

**\* \* \***

**<p><strong><span>Dagur's POV<span>\*\***

**\* \* \***

**<p>'My brothers, this is an historic day for the Berserker tribe. After many years, and many searches, Captain Vorg has found a Skrill!'**

**My soldiers all started cheering.**

**'For centuries, the Skrill has represented our strength, our power, our ferocity-'**

**Suddenly, my soldiers all stopped cheering. Surprised, I cut short my speech.**

**'What is it?! Why have you all stopped cheering?!' I demanded.**

**Vorg cleared his throat awkwardly. 'Uh, sir, I think we might have an... intruder...'**

**'Well, kill him then!' I ordered.**

**'We can't do that, sir...'**

**The reason for this turned out to be the dragons flanking the man who had just walked in on my speech, carrying a silent threat that suggested he would not hesitate to use said fire-breathers.**

**'\_Hello\_? Berserkers only!' I shouted.**

**The man replied by snarling at me.**

**Taken aback by this man who seemed more dragon than human, I could only watch as he walked up to my soldiers, the dragons snapping and snarling at them, and continued walking up to me.**

'Who are you, and what are you doing here?!' I demanded.

'Does it really matter?' he purred.

'Yes, it does!'

'All that matters is what I have come here for. Tell me, how would you feel if you had something stolen from you?'

'I don't know!' I snapped.

He appeared to not have expected my answer, and changed tactics.

'We both want the same thing...'

'Which is what?!'

'The Skrill.'

'You can't have it! It's \_mine\_!'

The man released an amused half-growl, half-laugh from his throat. 'Very possessive, aren't you?' he purred.

'What does that mean?!'

'Never mind. I think we are a lot alike, \_Berserker Chief\_.' This last part was dripping with sarcasm.

I paused to think about this.

'\_Yeah\_... \_we are\_...'

'And it is only logical that those who are alike, join together. If neither of us can have the Skrill, why don't we both have it...? Just think of how much damage our combined forces could do to the Night Fury rider...'

'Wait... you mean... \_Hiccup\_...?' Even mentioning his name made me want to rip him apart... which, if this guy let me borrow some of those dragons which were snarling at my soldiers, I could do very easily... 'Yeah...'

'What would you like to do most, Berserker Chief...?' I noticed that 'Berserker Chief' wasn't dripping with sarcasm.

'I want to wear Hiccup's Night Fury's skull as a helmet!'

'Actually, I wanted to wear part of a Night Fury, too... and eventually, I got my wish.'

I stared in disbelief at the cloak on his shoulders, which he gestured to.

'You... killed... a \_Night Fury\_...?' I gasped. Even \_I\_ hadn't done that yet... so I should definitely join him, because he had.

'Yes. And we will kill... Hiccup's... one together... you can have its skull as a helmet.'



'Really?! Oh, thank you, thank you, snarly guy!'

I didn't know this, but the snarly guy was thinking, \_Yes\_, \_he is mine now\_.

'So... are we going there now...?' I squealed excitedly.

'No, not yet, Dagur,' the snarly guy said fondly, even changing what he called me to my real name to make himself seem more mentorly.

I was so practically drunk with happiness and admiration of this great- no, \_legendary\_- guy, that I didn't even notice that he knew my name, even though I hadn't told him what it was.

'Where are we going, then, snarly guy?'

'We are going to go to the dragon riders, whom I have captured.'

'You captured Hiccup and his little dragon club?' I squealed.

'Yes. And you will get to kill them all. I am sure that they will be very... \_shocked\_ to see us.'

'Yeah, they will... wait, we're taking the Skrill?!' I gasped, realising what he'd meant by "shocking".

'Yes.'

'And yes, I'm sure they'll be shocked to see us... I'm sure they will...' I smiled. 'Berserkers! Follow me and the snarly guy!'

They did so, lagging back, trying to get as far away from the snarly guy as they could for two reasons; one: he definitely seemed more dragon than human, due to the fact that when he was angry, he snarled, and that he also wore a Night Fury-skin cloak; two, they knew something which I didn't.

They thought it was very strange for me to be acting like this, but as drunk in happiness and admiration as I was, I didn't.

'What's the snarly guy done to Dagur...?' one of them whispered.

'I don't know... but whatever he's done to him, he must be pretty powerful to have done it.'

'Aw, come on. I'm sure the snarly guy's not that bad... he reminds me of what Osvald was like...' another reasoned.

'Yeah... you're probably right...' the others agreed.

Although the snarly guy should have been listening to me going on about my plans of the really creative ways of how we could kill Hiccup and his little dragon club, he wasn't. Instead, he was actually listening to what the Berserker soldiers were saying.

He smiled to himself.

'What're you smiling about?' I asked.

'\_NOTHING\_!' he snapped.

I was a little surprised at this. A small part of me was slightly suspicious. Maybe the snarly guy was actually... \_two\_ \_faced\_...?

No, no, he couldn't be. He was great, \_legendary\_...

'Just... smiling about how we're going to destroy the dragon riders together.'

'Oh, yeah. Of course. Sorry.'

'It's alright, Dagur,' he smiled- but it was not a nice, good smile. I didn't notice this, though. I was drunk with happiness and admiration again.

'So, snarly guy- I've been thinking, maybe I shouldn't just call you "snarly guy". What's your name?'

'My name is Drago Bludvist.'

I was still too drunk with happiness and admiration to realise that I'd heard that name before.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>"Everything that has transpired has done so according to my design." That is all I have to say about what Drago does in this chapter.<strong>

\*\*Until next chapter, bye! :D\*\*

End  
file.